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Ecclesiastical Year

—AN—

Explanation of Catholic Faith, Ceremonies, etc.

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...THE...

ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR

FOR

Catholic Schools

and Institutions.

TRANSLATED
FROM THE GERMAN

OF

REV. ANDREAS PETZ.

BY A MEMBER OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER.

Third Edition.

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PREFACE.

IN presentiug a translation of Petz's Katholische Kirchenjahr to the Catholic public, we deem no apology necessary, since we have in English no similar work suited to the requirements of the class room, as well as to the wants of the home and fireside. We hope the work may find as generous a welcome among our American Catholics as the original did in Europe.

It cannot be called a literal translation since we have omitted some things suited to European usages, but not to the customs of America, and we have added other things where authority sanctioned it.

Wherever the translation differs from the original, standard works have been called into requisition, such as Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," "Clark's Spirago," "O'Brien On The Mass," "Dom Gueranger's Advent" "The Festal Year," "Shulzes Pastoral Theology," "Catholic Dictionary," "Catholic Ceremonies," Abbé Durand, "Lambing, The Sacramentals," and other works of reference and authority. The translator lays claim to nothing original in the work.

As Petz does not treat of "The Way of the Cross," we have taken the liberty of quoting it entire from Clarke's Spirago.

THE TRANSLATOR.

PART FIRST.

HOLY SEASONS.

The Ecclesiastical Year in General.

1. By Ecclesiastical Year we understand the yearly return of holy seasons, through which the redemption of mankind is renewed, continued and made available for the faithful, so that they may glorify God and sanctify themselves.

2. The Ecclesiastical Year differs from the Civil Year, not only in its divisions but also in its object. The Civil Year serves as a measure for the temporal wants of man; whereas, the Ecclesiastical Year pertains to his eternal interests.

3. The object of the Ecclesiastical Year is for us to renew the work of redemption, which God performed for sinful man, in order that we may offer to Him the homage which is His due, and obtain thereby abundant graces for the practice of virtue, to strenghthen us in our faith.

4. The means which the Ecclesiastical Year offers for the attainment of this object are the following:

(a) The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with the Sacraments.

(b) The Holy Seasons which are set apart for the celebration of the sacred mysteries.

(*c*) Sacred customs such as ceremonies, blessings, devotions, etc., which show us the significance of the Holy Seasons and imbue us with their spirit.

5. The foundation, the central point, the very soul, in fact, of the Ecclesiastical Year, is the Sacrifice of the Mass. Christ completed the work of redemption by His sacrifice on the cross; this sacrifice is continued and renewed in the Sacrifice of the Mass. It is the sacrifice of the Son of God, ever ascending to the throne of God. No tongue can tell the depths of its mysteries. No angel can understand its meaning. It is the offering of the human race to the Godhead.

The festal seasons of the Ecclesiastical Year place before us in succession, all the mysteries of the redemption, continually renewed in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

The Sacraments are the channels through which the fruits of the Mass are conveyed to our souls.

On the other hand, however, the ceremonies, sacramentals, etc., replete with graces, as well as symbolic ornament, surround the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, as well as the festivals of the year, and

the sacraments themselves. Thus everything in the entire Ecclesiastical Year revolves around, and pertains to, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

DIVISIONS.

The central point of our redemption is Christ's sacrifice on the cross, which reached its consummation in His glorious resurrection. Easter, therefore, with Holy Week forms the middle point of the Ecclesiastical Year, because this Holy Season places before our eyes the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The prophetical teachings of the Old Testament and the life of Christ until the time of His Passion were only a preparation for the Sacrifice of the Cross. We celebrate this preparation by Advent and the Christmas season.

The coming of the Holy Ghost, and the spread of Christianity is a continuation and completion of the Sacrifice of the Cross. We celebrate this continuation and completion by the Season of Pentecost.

In the three principal parts of the Mass, we find again the three parts of the Sacrifice of the Cross; the preparation of the sacrifice in the Offertory; the offering of the sacrifice in the Consecration; and the distribution of the fruits in the Communion.

Christ appears in the work of redemption with a threefold dignity; as Prophet, because He prepares His most sacred Sacrifice through the Old

Testament and by His own life and labors; as High Priest, because He consummates His sacrifice on the Cross; and as King, because through the fruits of His sacrifice He establishes a kingdom which continually perpetuates and governs itself. The Ecclesiastical Year shows us this threefold dignity of Our Redeemer and therefore contains three divisions:

(1.) The Christmas Season, which represents the prophetic dignity.

(2) The Easter Season, representing the High Priest's dignity.

(3.) The Pentecost Season, which represents the Royal Dignity of Christ.

The Christian who conforms to the teachings of the Ecclesiastical Year is led into the three degrees of the spiritual life:—purification, inspiration and union. The festal circle begins anew every year, and, like a tree, yearly adds a new ring of perfection. These divisions are festal cycles, because each cycle has a principal feast as central point around which the days and feasts of the season revolve; they form a season of preparation and a subsequent commemoration according as they precede or follow the feast.

VIGIL AND OCTAVE.

1. The day preceding the feast is called the Vigil. This word comes from the Latin and means night-

watch. The early Christians spent the night, or a great part of the night preceding a feast, in prayer, fasting, and the singing of hymns and psalms. These nightwatches were called vigils. Even in the time of the Apostles the first Christians kept these vigils in commemoration of the nightwatches of our Lord. Later these vigils were restricted to the day immediately preceding a feast and for these special days retained the name vigil. The Midnight Mass on Christmas is still kept in remembrance of the original celebration of the vigils. Besides the three principal feasts, other feasts have vigils also, which are not so solemnly kept. The vigils admonish us, to prepare, like the first Christians, for the approaching feast by penance and recollection.

2. The days immediately following the feast form the Octave, that is, an eight day celebration, or continuation of the feast.

Even in the Old Testament the principal feasts were celebrated with octaves; for instance, Easter, or the Feast of the Tabernacles; and the Christians even in the time of the Apostles, celebrated the principal feasts with octaves. Later the Church appointed octaves for several other feasts, which were not however so solemnly kept. The object of these eight day celebrations is to enhance, as it were, the dignity of the feast, and thereby to impress the mysteries more deeply and permanently upon the hearts of the faithful.

3. The Sundays with their ferias, and also sev-

eral other feasts form the preparation and subsequent commemoration of the three principal feasts.

SUNDAY.

1. The word Sunday comes from Heathendom: The first day of the week was dedicated to the Sun god, therefore called Sunday, or day of the sun (dies solis). We are reminded thereby of that Sun which appears to us in the person of Jesus Christ, warming and illuminating our souls, even here on this earth, and which one day will, in the great beyond, rejoice us by its eternal brilliancy.

In the language of the Church this day is called, at least since the time of Constantine, if not from the time of the Apostles, the day of the Lord (dies dominica).

2. Sunday is merely of ecclesiastical institution, dating, however, from the time of the Apostles. God established the Sabbath as a perpetual reminder of the creation, in order to admonish mankind that they owe their Creator veneration and gratitude; at the same time providing necessary rest for man and beast. The Apostles appointed Sunday for this day, because Christ, by his resurrection, completed the work of redemption, and sent the Holy Ghost on Sunday. Sunday, therefore, admonishes us more emphatically of the duty of gratitude, than the Sabbath of the Old Law; for our Heavenly Father began the work of creation, the Son of God completed the work of redemption, and the Holy Ghost com-

menced His work in the Church of Christ on the first day of the week. It places before us, therefore, the three greatest of God's gifts to man: the Creation, the Redemption, and the Sanctification. This day is dedicated, therefore, to the Most Holy Trinity. On Sunday the Christian should thank the Adorable Trinity for all graces received, especially for those of the past week; he should make atonement for faults committed and beg for grace and strength for the coming week.

3. The Sundays, then, are the guides of the entire Ecclesiastical Year; they either prepare for a coming high feast, or they explain the meaning of the feast. In the Epistles and Gospels of every Sunday the faithful are instructed in their duties for the entire year.

4. The Sundays are named and reckoned, either according to the time in which they occur, namely: the Sundays of Advent and of Lent, or according to the feasts to which they belong; the Sundays after Epiphany, after Easter, and after Pentecost. Names for certain special Sundays are obtained partly from the Introit of the Mass; for example, Oculi, Laetare, etc., partly from the special solemnity such as, Passion Sunday, Palm Sunday, Low Sunday. The Sundays of Advent, Lent and after Easter, always remain the same in number. The Sundays after Epiphany and the Sundays after Pentecost are sometimes more, sometimes fewer in number. Those of the former

vary between two and six, of the latter between twenty-four and twenty-eight. The movability of Easter is the cause of this variation.

5. By the Council of Nice in the year 325, it was decreed that the festival of Easter should be celebrated always on the first Sunday after the first full moon in spring. It cannot therefore, be celebrated before the 22nd of March, nor after the 25th of April, but always moves within this time.

The Sundays are regulated according to the time of Easter. If Easter occurs late, the six Sundays after Epiphany and the twenty-four Sundays after Pentecost are celebrated in their regular order.

The earlier Easter falls the more Sundays after Epiphany fall away, and these are then put in at the end of the Ecclesiastical Year, between the twenty-third and the last Sunday after Pentecost. The Sundays of Lent and the Sundays after Easter occur sometimes earlier, sometimes later, according to the time of Easter; only the Sundays of Advent, and the Sundays following until the second Sunday after Epiphany inclusive, remain always the same.

6. On Sunday, or the evening before, Holy Water is blessed. Before High Mass the Priest sprinkles the people with this water, while the Asperges is sung. Thereby the significance of Sunday is made known to us. The faithful come to church on Sunday in order to be cleansed in the blood of Christ, from the dust of sin, which has in the course of the week adhered to them, and to renew the

grace of Baptism, of which they should be reminded by the sprinkling of the Holy Water.

Even in the Old Testament washing with water was repeatedly commanded, especially as a preparation before sacrifice, and oftentimes, when according to the Jewish law a person was considered unclean. The Jews attributed an atoning and purifying power to water. In the New Law this custom is more strictly adhered to, since Christ established the sacrament of Baptism, in which, through water and the Word of God, sins are washed away. The Church, therefore, even in the earliest times, blessed water, not only for use in Baptism, but also for general use. St. Basil (†379) says that the blessing of water rests upon Apostolic tradition. The blessing of water has always been customary in the Eastern, as well as in the Western Church. In the Greek Church this blessing takes place every month, in the Roman Church, every Sunday.

At the blessing of the water the salt is blessed first, then the water, then the salt is mixed with the water three times in the form of a cross, and finally, the mixture is again blessed. The blessing of the salt, as well as the water, begins with an exorcism, in order that not only the power of Satan shall be taken from the salt and water, but that the virtue of driving away the power of Satan, or at least diminishing it, shall also be imparted to the Holy Water. Salt is mixed with water to express the double power of Holy Water, that of healing and of purifying.

Water signifies purification; salt which preserves from corruption and gives a relish to food, is to denote that Holy Water preserves us from the corruption of sin, and is a means of sanctifying our life, and of making us pleasing to God. The salt is sprinkled in the water three times in the form of a cross to denote that this blessing is performed in the name of the triune God, and by virtue of the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The substance of the other prayers of this blessing is: May God through this water destroy all the influences of the evil spirit, ward off sickness and other evils, promote the welfare of body and soul, and sanctify everything with which it is sprinkled.

The efficacy of Holy Water is the following: The remission of venial sin,—imparting grace, by which contrition and devotion are increased,—a shield against evil spirits,—it wards off diseases and other temporal evils. These effects, however, will only be experienced by those who use Holy Water with faith and a contrite heart.

The use of Holy Water is manifold. Before High Mass on Sunday the faithful are sprinkled by the priest to sanctify them for the Divine Service, about to begin, so that all present may partake intimately of the Holy Sacrifice without indifference or distraction. The priest says at the same time the penitential psalm "Miserere" and finally prays that God will send his angel to guard those who are present. The faithful should unite with the prayers

of the priest, and in a collected and penitential spirit prepare for the sacred sacrifice.

On entering the church the faithful sprinkle themselves with Holy Water; for this purpose fonts are placed near the door of the churches. In early Christian times large wash basins, in which the people might wash face and hands before entering the church, stood in the vestibule. The Christian is thereby reminded that he should appear in the sanctuary of God with a pure heart and a recollected spirit. He blesses himself that he may more readily overcome temptations, thereby obtaining abundant graces. On leaving the church the faithful also bless themselves with Holy Water to retain the graces received, and to be able to continue the divine service at home, and thus always rejoice in the protection of God. They take Holy Water home with them for the same reason. Thus the sanctifying power of the Redeemer extends from the temple of God to all Christian homes. We should use Holy Water not only exteriorly and mechanically, but with a lively faith, a penitential spirit, confidence in God, and with interior devotion. We should use it on getting up and on going to bed, on coming in and on going out, in temptation, and often during the day, especially in time of danger.

FERIALS.

1. The early Christians called the first day of the week the Lord's Day, and the last day the Sabbath, all the other days were called Ferials. This designation of the days of the week was confirmed by Pope Sylvester (†335).

2. The word ferial comes from the Latin, and means holyday. The week days are so called to remind us that the Church celebrates a perpetual Divine Service, not only on Sundays and Holydays, but on every day of the week, so that the true Christian may also unite in a lifelong worship of God.

3. The ferials follow the preceding Sunday, and form its octave; they should lead the thoughts of Sunday into the actions of daily life. The Christian, therefore, should practice during the week what was preached to him on Sunday.

4. Since the time of the Apostles, Wednesday and Friday were designited as ferials of penance and fast, and the faithful were even obliged to attend Divine Service on these days; because Christ was sold on Wednesday and crucified on Friday. In oriental countries, however, Saturday soon took the place of Wednesday.

5. Among the ferials are the so-called greater ferials, which are more solemnly celebrated in the office of the day, as well as in the Mass. To these belong the ferials of Advent, Lent, Ember Days, etc.

EMBER DAYS.

1. Ember Days are the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays of the Quarter Tenses, so called because they occur four times a year,—in Advent, Lent, Pentecost week, and after the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, in September.

2. Pope Leo I. the Great (†461) says that the custom of these fasts was introduced by the Apostles.

The object of Ember Days is: (1) To dedicate the four seasons of the year to God by prayer, fasting and good works.

(2) To thank God for all the graces received during the past season, to do penance for our sins, to implore the blessing of heaven, and to make good resolutions for the approaching season.

(3) To implore God to grant us worthy priests for His holy Church; for it is a rule of the Church that priests be ordained at Embertide.

FEASTS.

1. Besides the three principal feasts of the Ecclesiastical year, there are a great number of other feasts, which like the Sundays, are attached to the principal feasts. They form not only the ornament of the Ecclesiastical Year, but also place before us the fruits of holiness which have ripened on the living tree of the Church.

2. The feasts have all been regulated by the Church, some of them are even of Apostolic origin; the most of them, however, are of a later date. In the first centuries feasts were not commanded to be kept, but the faithful, of their own free will celebrated the anniversaries of the most important events in the life of Christ and His saints. Later the celebration of these feasts was commanded by the Church.

3. In the course of time, the number of feasts increased, and when the Church saw that the faithful instead of deriving benefit from their celebration, rather desecrated them, she abolished certain feasts or transferred their celebration to the following Sunday; in so doing she respected the capabilities and wants of the faithful.

4. Besides the feasts of obligation, the Church has a great many others, which are celebrated only in the Breviary and in the Mass. Nearly every day in the year the feast of some saint is celebrated, to remind us that we also are called to sanctity, and that we should labor every day to attain that end.

5. Feasts may be divided into four classes, according to their meaning:

1. Feasts of Our Lord,

2. Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary,

3. Feasts of the Angels, Apostles and Evangelists, and

4. Feasts of the other Saints.

The feasts of Our Lord place before us mysteries intimately connected with the work of Redemption. The feasts of the Blessed Virgin show us Mary's part in the Redemption, by becoming the Mother of God, and thus the Mother of mankind, thereby aiding man in obtaining his salvation.

After Mary, the Angels, Apostles, and Evangelists, who first announced and spread the Gospel, must be considered the chief participators in the work of Redemption. In these, as well as in the other Saints, we see the fruits of the Redemption, namely the virtues.

6. There are movable and immovable feasts in the Ecclesiastical Year. The movable feasts are those which are regulated according to the time of Easter, and are celebrated, therefore, sometimes earlier, sometimes later in the year,— such as Ascention, Pentecost and others. Immovable feasts are those that are always celebrated on the same day of the year, and their number is by far the greater.

7. As the object of the entire Ecclesiastical Year is to place before the faithful the work of the Redemption, so each day of the year has its special office to perform in this regard. In the Divine Office, and in the formulas of the Mass, each day's share is clearly outlined. It is the duty of every Christian to participate, not only outwardly in this daily celebration of feasts, but to live accordingly, and thus live the life of our Holy Church. Those

who cannot participate in the Divine Service, should the more diligently seek to learn from the Epistles and Gospels of the Sundays and Holy days, what each Holy Season prescribes for us to believe and practice.

HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION.

JANUARY 1ST:
The Circumcision of our Lord—New Year's Day.

AUGUST 15TH:
The Assumption of the B. V. Mary.

NOVEMBER 1ST:
All Saints' Day.

DECEMBER 8TH:
The Immaculate Conception of the B. V. Mary.

DECEMBER 25TH:
Christmas Day.

Ascension Day.

THE FIRST FESTAL CYCLE.

1. The first festal cycle is the Christmas season. It begins with the first Sunday of Advent, and closes with the Saturday preceding Septuagesima Sunday; its central point is the feast of Christmas. Advent forms its remote preparation, its proximate preparation is Christmas Eve. The immediate subsequent commemoration extends from the feast of St. Stephen, until Epiphany, the remote subsequent commemoration from Epiphany to Septuagesima.

2. The main thought of this festal cycle is the birth of Christ. Advent shows the longing and preparation in the Old Law for the coming Messiah, which finally attains its object in the birth of Christ. Christmas shows us the Messiah as He reveals Himself to mankind, and proclaims His kingdom. The Christian should prove himself in Advent, and endeavor to gain greater purity of heart. At Christmas he should renew his resolution to live only for Jesus, and to become more like unto Him, and in the time following he should endeavor to enliven and confirm his faith.

ADVENT.

1. The word Advent comes from the Latin and means "The coming." The four weeks preceding Christmas are so called because they are set apart by the Church to prepare for the coming of Christ.

2. With great longing, the world, for four thousand years, waited for the coming of the Redeemer. God, Himself, nourished this longing by repeated prophetic promises, which became more distinctly clear as the time of fulfillment approached. The universal misery in which mankind then languished increased this longing for the Redeemer. These four thousand years are typified by the four weeks before Christmas. The longing for the Messiah, announced by the prophets, is partly expressed in the Rorate Masses, but more especially so in the Divine Office, which becomes more and more beseeching as the feast of Christmas approaches. The penance which we are exhorted to practice during this time is symbolical of the misery of sin.

3. The Church wishes to awaken this longing and penitential spirit in the hearts of the faithful, in order to prepare them for the advent of the Redeemer.

Therefore:

(1) Solemnization of marriage is forbidden during this time, so that the solemnity of the season may not be disturbed by noisy pleasures.

(2) The violet color used at Mass is to remind

us that heaven closed against sinners, can be opened again by penance.

(3) The Gloria is omitted on those days on which no feast falls.

(4) The preaching of St. John the Baptist in the Gospels, and the exhortations of St. Paul in the Epistles of the Sundays of Advent, as well as the fast days of this time, point distinctly to penance. These fast days are all the Fridays of Advent, the Ember days, and the Vigil of Christmas.

4. The severity of penance, is however, moderated by a glance at Mary, who appears as the Rosy Dawn to gradually dispel the darkness of sin. Therefor the joyous feast of the Immaculate Conception is celebrated in the midst of this penitential season. Throughout the Breviary and the prayers of the Mass, Mary, the Mother of the Redeemer, is often referred to as the Rosy Aurora of our Redemption, especially so in the Rorate Masses sung at early dawn. The feast of the Expectation on the 18th of December should arouse increased devotion and longing for the coming Messiah.

The Rorate Masses take their name from the Introit of the Mass, frequently used during Advent, which begins with Rorate Coeli (drop down dew ye heavens). They are also called Masses of the Angel, because the Gospel of these Masses relates to the Annuniciation of the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Blessed Virgin.

5. In order to keep Advent in a befitting manner the Christian should:

1st. Awaken a penitential spirit and practice works of penance,—he should endeavor to conquer at least one prominent fault and to cultivate or practice some particular virtue.

2d. He should devote himself to prayer, and have a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and

3d. Have a great longing for the birth of the Christ Child in his heart.

6. Even in the first centuries the faithful prepared themselves for the coming of Christmas by a long season of prayer and fasting, but Advent was not definitely fixed until the fifth and sixth centuries.

7. The followng important feasts fall in Advent:

(1) The Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, which was celebrated in the earliest times.

This Apostle stands conspicious at the entrance of the Ecclesiastical Year, for Advent begins with the Sunday nearest the feast of St. Andrew. Not only is Andrew the first born of the Apostles, but he led the other Apostles to Christ, and as a special lover of the Cross, he tells us that the cross is the key of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the foundation of the Ecclesiastical Year. This feast admonishes us, as it were, to begin the year with a love for the Cross, and to make the resolution of practicing self-denial.

(2) The feast of the Immaculate Conception. This feast was celebrated by the churches of the East, even in the fifth century, and by the churches of the West since the seventh century. Pope Pius IX. in the year 1854 proclaimed, to the joy of the whole Catholic world, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin to be a dogma of the Church. Since then this feast has been more zealously kept. With the conception of Mary, the Morning Star of the Redemption arose. On this beautiful feast the Christian should pray God to enlighten him, that he may know the faults of the past year, and learn from Mary, by purity of heart, to prepare for the coming of Christ.

(3) Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle, Dec. 21.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

1. This vigil is the only one which, in its original form, is celebrated by Divine Service at midnight. Because Christ was born at midnight the Church has always celebrated this hour with prayer and canticles of praise.

2. In some European countries the houses are blessed on this vigil, and also on the vigils of the Circumcision and Epiphany, to show that not only the hearts of the faithful, but also their houses, should be purified from the curse of sin, and sanctified as a worthy dwelling place for the new born Saviour.

3. On this Holy Eve, the faithful should, with renewed ferver, increase their longing for the coming Messiah, by a greater spirit of penance; Christmas gifts should be received as actual gifts from the Christ Child, for if He had not come into the world, there would be no Christmas gifts. These temporal gifts should remind us of the far more precious gifts of grace which Christ brought from heaven.

4. The Christmas tree, hung with candles, fruits of all kinds, and surrounded with gifts, has a beautiful meaning. It reminds us of the tree of pride and disobedience in Paradise, whose fruits brought sin and death into the world; but it also reminds us of the tree of life, the tree of humility and obedience, that sprang into life through the Incarnation of Christ, and on which the Redeemer purchased grace and life for us. From this tree the light of faith and the different forms of grace are imparted to the faithful. For this light of faith, for these gifts of grace, the Christmas tree admonishes us to thank the dear Christ Child.

5. The Crib which is set up at Christmas time owes it origin to St. Francis of Assisi, who lived in the thirteenth century. His burning love for the Christ Child impelled him to erect a crib with figures representing the birth of Christ, and thereby enkindle this love in others. This example found widespread imitation. The cribs often represent different scenes of the Old and the New Testament, all referring to the dear Christ Child. This is to

teach us that Christ is the central point of the New Testament,—that all mankind should in a spiritual manner gather around Him, and offer Him sacrifice and adoration.

CHRISTMAS.

1. The word Christmas comes from Christ's Mass, shortened into Christmas, or from Christ's Feast,—feast being Mass.

2. Previous to the fourth century the people of the East celebrated this feast on the 6th of January, in union with the Feast of the Epiphany. From this time on, it was invariably celebrated on the 25th of December, as it had been by the churches of the West, even from the time of the Apostles.

3. Christmas as chief feast, is especially distinguished from other feasts by: (1) When Christmas falls on Friday there is neither fast nor abstinence. (2) On this day priests are allowed to celebrate three Masses, contrary to the rule which prevails on every other day of the year. (3) This feast is intimately united with several feasts of the most illustrious saints.

4. It is not definitely known when the practice of saying three Masses on Christmas day originated, still, from the time of Pope Gregory the Great in the sixth century, this has been the universal custom.

This threefold sacrifice represents the threefold birth of Christ; namely, (1) The first Mass at Midnight is offered up in memory of His birth as man, of the Blessed Virgin; it is read at midnight because Christ was born at that hour, and because He came, as the light of the world, to dispel the darkness of sin; it is called the Mass of the Angels, because the Angels announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds, and at the same time peace on earth to men of good will. The faithful should pray for this peace, especially at Midnight Mass.

(2) The second Mass at daybreak is said in remembrance of His birth in the hearts of His followers. It is said at daybreak as a symbol of the dawn of the spiritual life in our hearts by the Sun of Justice. It is also called the Mass of the Shepherds because the Gospel read at this Mass relates to the adoration of the Shepherds; it exhorts us to adore the Christ Child with the shepherds.

(3) The third Mass commemorates His eternal birth from the Father before all ages, and for that reason its Gospel tells of the time when the Word was, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." It is said in the daytime that its brightness may figure the glories of the Godhead. The faithful should seek to acquire greater knowledge of Christ, and endeavor to imitate His example—thereby obtaining the fullness of His graces.

CHRISTMAS OCTAVE.

1. This octave is not like the octaves of other high feasts—a simple repetition of the feast itself, but the Church surrounds the manger of the Infant God with the names of her most illustrious Saints, like brilliant planets encircling the sun.

2. The feast of St. Stephen, of the Apostle John and the Holy Innocents belong to the oldest feasts of the Church, and are always found in connection with the feast of Christmas; on the other hand the feast of St. Sylvester and of St. Thomas of Canterbury, the great saint of the English race, were added later.

3. These five feasts are, so to say, the representatives of all the feasts of the Saints in the entire Ecclesiastical Year; they encircle the cradle of the new born Redeemer, from whom all holiness proceeds. These feasts teach us that, as the life of Jesus was a continual sacrifice, so should the life of every Christian be one of sacrifice.

4. (1) St. Stephen is the leader of all martyrs, for he was the first to suffer martyrdom for the faith. He bears aloft the red banner of our holy faith.

(2) The Apostle John is the leader of all virginal souls, who serve the lord in love and innocence. He was the beloved disciple of Our Lord, and faithfully preserved his innocence and love until death. He bears aloft the white banner of virginal love.

(3) The Holy Innocents are the leaders of all penitents, for both are purified from sin—the former from Original, the latter from Actual sin—not through any merit of their own, but only through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Innocents march onward with the violet banner of Penance.

(4) St. Thomas, Bishop of Canterbury, who suffered martyrdom for the Church, is the leader of those who suffer persecution patiently for the Church of Christ; and finally,

(5) St. Sylvester, who through the loyal discharge of his duty for the welfare of the Church, is the leader of those who faithfully devote their lives to the service of the Church.

Every Christian must follow one of these leaders if he wishes to live for Christ.

5. On the Feast of St. John, in some countries of Europe, it is customary to bless wine after Mass. According to an ancient tradition this Apostle was offered poisoned wine, which he blessed and drank without injury.

6. The Feast of the Holy Innocents is celebrated with violet vestments in remembrance of the mothers of Bethlehem lamenting for their innocent children, waiting in Limbo for the Redeemer, and of the penitents who follow the Holy Innocents to the crib.*

*On the octave of this feast red vestments are worn. The Church remembers on this day the glory of these martyrs as well as the reward awaiting the persevering penitents in Heaven.

7. The Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord forms the close of the Octave of Christmas. This feast was introduced in the middle of the sixth century to counteract the influence of the heathen feasts of this season of the year, celebrated with great immoral excesses. At first this day was kept as a day of fast and penance, but gradually assumed more of a festive character, to remind us that the Redeemer, in obedience to the Mosaic law, submitted himself to circumcision, whereupon the name of Jesus was given Him. With this day the civil year begins—therefore this day reminds us to begin and end the new year in the name of Jesus.

8. The Christmas celebration is continued after the feast of the Circumcision by the Octaves of St. Stephen, the Apostle St. John, and the Holy Innocents, until finally it reaches its zenith in the feast of the Epiphany.

EPIPHANY.

1. The word Epiphany means manifestation. It is kept in grateful remembrance of Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles. This feast dates from the time of the Apostles,—according to an old tradition the Church celebrates three remarkable events on this day: The adoration of the Magi, Christ's baptism by John in the Jordan, and the changing of water into wine at the wedding of Cana. The Feast of the Epiphany, or Manifestation, celebrates the

threefold manifestation of Christ to mankind; namely,

(1) By the wonderful call of the Wise Men, Christ revealed Himself to the Heathen as King—for the heathen Wise Men sought and adored the new born King of the Jews.

(2) By His Baptism in the Jordan, He revealed Himself to the Jews as the looked for prophet, whom a voice from heaven commanded them to hear.

(3) By the miracle of changing the water into wine at the wedding of Cana, He revealed Himself as High Priest.

4. Among these three mysteries the first one stands prominent, therefore the day is often called the Feast of the Three Kings. The Wise Men are called kings, either because they were princes of small countries in the East, or because they came of a royal race.

5. On this day the faithful should thank God for the priceless blessing of Christian faith,—they should renew this living faith, and also remember to pray for the poor Heathen who have not been awarded this saving gift. Out of gratitude they should offer their Redeemer, with the three Wise Men, the gold of faith, the frankincense of prayer, and the myrrh of mortification.

SUBSEQUENT COMMEMORATION.

The subsequent commemoration of this festal cycle is limited to the six Sundays after Epiphany,

but which may be fewer, according to the date of Easter.

1. These six Sundays show us Jesus in the temple and in the house of His parents, as a model for youth; and then also in His public life, teaching in the temple and working miracles, He showed Himself to be the expected Prophet. Since His teaching and miracles are the foundation and propagation of His divine kingdom, as well as that of His Church upon earth, so these Sundays may partly belong to the third festal cycle.

2. The following important feasts fall in this season:

(1) The Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. According to Holy Scriptures, this name was venerated at all times; a special feast in honor of this most Holy Name was instituted first in the Franciscan Order in the sixteenth century. In 1721 Innocent XIII. ordered this feast to be celebrated throughout the Church on the second Sunday after Epiphany. Write this most holy name on your hearts.

(2) The Feast of the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin with St. Joseph on the 23d of January was established about the same time as the former feast. It teaches us especially to recognize St. Joseph as the head and the guardian of the Holy Family, and admonishes us therefore to venerate him as the keeper of God's treasures.

(3) The Feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome, January 18th, and the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25th, are of ancient origin. The examples of these Apostolic Princes ought to enliven our faith.

CANDLEMAS.

1. Candlemas, or the Feast of the Purification, forms, so to say, the transition feast from the Christmas season into the Easter season. If it did not originate in the time of the Apostles, it is nevertheless from the first centuries.

2. A double celebration takes place on this feast; namely, the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, and the presentation of Our Lord in the Temple of Jerusalem. It is, therefore, a feast of Our Lady and one of Our Lord.

3. As a feast of Our Lady it belongs to the Christmas cycle. Through Mary we received Jesus, Who revealed Himself to us in the first festal cycle as the Light of the world. In humble obedience she brings her Divine Child to the Temple, where Simeon and Anna acknowledge and greet Him as the Light of the World. The Blessed Virgin still continues to obtain for all Christians, who like Simeon and Anna truly desire it, the knowledge of this heavenly light.

4. As a feast of Our Lord, it belongs to the Easter cycle. In Mary's arms Jesus offers Himself for the first time in the temple for the redemption

of man, thereby beginning His priestly sacrificial life, which represents the second cycle. The Christian, who in the first festal cycle was enlightened by the gift of faith, should now with Simeon and Anna not only gratefully thank God for this gift, but he should take Jesus in his arms and also walk with Him on the way of sacrifice.

5. This day is usually called Candlemas Day, because on this day candles are blessed for the whole year, followed by a procession with lighted candles. This procession, and probably the blessing of candles, originated in the sixth century, at the season when the heathen feasts and processions were celebrated. This may have been an exterior motive for the introduction of processions with candles, but the symbolic meaning is, at all events, derived from the feast itself.

6. This procession also reminds us of that procession in which Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anna accompanied Jesus, "The Light of the World," to His first sacrifice in the Temple with the light of faith and sacrificial love in their hearts. As Christ, "The Light of the World," was sacrificed, or consumed for the salvation of the world, so the candles consume themselves while they reflect light. The burning candles are, therefore, a symbol of Jesus Christ, and signify the double meaning of this feast.

7. Candles are blessed because everything used in connection with the Divine Service should be

blessed. In the blessing of the candles, the Church prays especially that the significance of these candles may be realized by the faithful. In general, the spirit of the Church in regard to blessed candles has been caught by the faithful, who have come to look upon them as one of the most efficacious of the sacramentals. They have wax candles blessed on this day to use in their homes on solemn occasions, in times of danger, especially from the elements, and to place in the hands of the dying; the material light being thus made a symbol of the invisible light which is to guide them after death to the realms of everlasting happiness.

8. Lighted candles were used in all divine services from the earliest times—not only at night, but also in the daytime. The lighted candle was always recognized as a symbol of Jesus Christ, who enlightens us and obtains our salvation, through Whom alone every act of divine service receives power and efficacy. The lighted candle is also a beautiful emblem of the Christian life. As the candle is dedicated to the service of God, so is the life of a Christian by Baptism. As the wax from which the candle is made is laboriously gathered by the bees, so the life of a Christian should be a collection of virtues and good works. The burning candle is consumed, so should the life of a Christian be consumed in the service of God.

Finally, the ascending, illuminating, and consuming flame is an emblem of the three divine virtues:

Faith, Hope, and Charity, which make the whole life of man acceptable to God.

9. On the Feast of St. Blase, February 3d, it is customary, in many places, to bless the throat with candles in the form of a cross. This blessing is used as a preventive, or cure of throat diseases, because St. Blase, as related in his life, miraculously cured a child of a dangerous throat disease. The Christian may see in this blessing with candles in the form of a cross an admonition to follow Christ in the light of faith, on His way of the Cross, which the Second Festal Cycle of the Ecclesiastical Year places before us.

SECOND OR PASCHAL CYCLE.

1. The Paschal Cycle, or Eastertide, comprises the time from Septuagesima Sunday till the close of the octave of Ascension. The remote preparation for Easter extends from Septuagesima Sunday to Holy Saturday which forms the immediate preparation. The Octave of Easter forms the immediate subsequent commemoration, and the time from Low Sunday until after the Octave of the Ascension forms the remote subsequent commemoration.

2. The central point of this festal cycle, as well as of the entire Ecclesiastical Year, is the festival of Easter. All the movable feasts of the year are regulated by the date of this feast.

3. This festal cycle presents Jesus to us as the High Priest who offers Himself for the salvation of mankind. The work of redemption revealed in the first festal cycle will now be accomplished; the Kingdom of God which was announced will now be established.

4. Christ appeared to us in His deepest humiliation, but also in His exaltation. To every Christian He calls: "He who will follow Me, let him deny

himself, take up his cross and follow Me." We must suffer with Jesus so that we may be glorified with Him. We must cast off the old man and put on the new. This should be the task of every Christian in the second cycle of the Ecclesiastical Year.

LENT.

1. The preparation for Easter, commonly called Lent, is of Apostolic origin; its duration varied, being sometimes forty, sometimes fifty, sometimes sixty, or seventy days before Easter. Whence we get the names Quadragesima, Quinquagesima, Sexagesima and Septuagesima. It was only in the sixth century that Pope Gregory the Great regulated the time of Easter as we have it now. Lent may be divided into four parts,

(1) The time from Septuagesima Sunday to Ash Wednesday—the preparation proper of Lent. (2) From Ash Wednesday to Passion Sunday. (3) Passion Week. (4) Holy Week.

2. The faithful should enter more and more into the spirit of the sufferings of Christ,—be more moved with compassion, and inspired with a more penitential spirit.

3. From Septuagesima Sunday the Christian should resolve to follow Christ on the way of suffering and penance, especially on the three days preceding Ash Wednesday,—so called Carnival days, or Shrovetide, when the combat between the king-

dom of Christ and that of Satan is so powerful. The Church has already put on the penitential violet color, and introduced many devotions, particularly the Triduum, or Forty Hour's Devotion, which St. Philip Neri and St. Charles Borromeo, in the sixteenth century, instituted for the first time at Shrovetide. This was instituted in order to keep the people from the excesses of these days, and to atone by penance and prayer for the sins committed during Carnival. Pope Clement XIII. attached a plenary indulgence to this devotion.

4. The fast of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts till Easter Sunday; during this time there are forty-six days, but as we do not fast on the six Sundays falling in this time, the fast is just forty days. For this reason it is called the forty days of Lent. Moses, Elias, the Ninivites, and even our Lord fasted forty days. The first Christians imitated their example, not only in abstaining from meat and other nutritious food, such as milk and eggs, but waited until sundown before breaking their fast. Since, in the course of time, the penitential spirit had grown lax, the Lenten regulations were mitigated, so much so, that now our fast, in comparison with the fasts of the early Christians, does not even deserve the name of fast.

5. We should fast, 1st, in order to imitate Christ, who fasted forty days and nights before he began His combat with Satan, thereby teaching us that

we must overcome temptation and evil inclinations by mortification. 2nd. We should fast to purify our hearts from sin, to do penance for sins committed, so that we may arise with Christ to a new and spiritual life. In the Preface of this season the fruits of penance are briefly given; namely, the suppression of sin and the elevation of the soul enriched with virtues and merit.

6. In this time of penance the Church forbids marriage festivities, and even avoids all signs of joy; for example, the Gloria and the Alleluia at Mass, are omitted. It also increases the public devotions and reminds us of the sufferings of Christ, or admonishes us to do penance. The Christian too should endeavor to be recollected, avoiding all pleasures and gayeties, and meditate especially upon the Passion of Christ, in order to correspond with the admonitions of Lent. Money saved in Lent should be bestowed in charity. Through such practices the heart will be moved to contrition and be prepared for a worthy reception of Communion at Easter.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

1. The name Ash Wednesday comes from the ceremony of putting ashes on the forehead of the clergy and the faithful on this day, in order to initiate them canonically into the penitential spirit. Ashes are a symbol of death, mourning and penance, and as such were used even in the Old Testament,

for example, Mardocheus sprinkled ashes on his head. The Ninivites sat in ashes. In the beginning of Christianity the sinner was reconciled to the Church through public penance, by sprinkling ashes on his head. Soon the faithful began to sprinkle themselves with ashes at the beginning of Lent, as a sign of penance. This custom was established by the Church in the eleventh century as a remembrance of the former public penances. The ashes used on this occasion are the ashes of the palm branches which were blessed on Palm Sunday of the previous year. Our penance, therefore, should be to combat with Christ, suffer with Him, and thereby gain the palm of victory. When sprinkling the ashes the priest says those words which God said to our first parents after their fall: "Remember man that dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return," and thereby marks upon his forehead the judgment of death, under which he fell by sin. Penance alone can mitigate the terror of death and save us from eternal damnation.

The prayers which are said at the blessing of the ashes and at their distribution implore God's forgiveness of sin, and beg for strength and protection in the spirtual combat now beginning for the true penitent.

2. From Ash Wednesday to Passion Sunday the Christian should meditate on Christ's work of redemption; he should overcome his evil inclinations by corporal and spiritual mortification, in order to suppress sin, so that his heart may partake of the Redemption.

PASSION WEEK.

The third division of Lent begins with Passion Sunday; from this day on, the Church meditates exclusively on the sufferings of Christ. The Christian should also do this, and increase his practice of mortification and self-denial. From Passion Sunday on, all the crucifixes are covered, or veiled,—every joyous thought should be set aside, and our minds turned to that cross which is to be erected upon Golgotha. We should meditate upon our Redeemer, Who in His sufferings concealed His divinity and clothed Himself entirely in the garb of an embassador. The crucifix is covered with violet to remind the faithful that their hearts should be penetrated with sorrow at the sufferings of Christ, and with contrition for their sins. In the office of the day the Prophecies of Jeremiah are read, the Gloria is omitted, also the psalm Judica at the beginning of Mass, unless a feast of our Lord or the Saints is celebrated.

FEASTS OF SAINTS.

1. Formerly the feast of a Saint was not permitted to be celebrated during Lent, because the Church wished the faithful to meditate on the Passion of Christ and awaken a penitential spirit; at present it is only Holy Week which excludes these feasts. During the rest of Lent several feasts are now celebrated. Among the most important are:

(1) The Feast of St. Joseph on the 19th of March, which was celebrated in the Eastern Church since the ninth century, but it is only two hundred years ago that its celebration became universal in the Western Church. This feast shows us the important part that St. Joseph took in the work of Redemption, for, as foster father of Jesus, as support and guardian of the Holy Family, he, next to Mary, had the greatest share in this work. Therefore, after Mary, he is our greatest intercessor with God. He is especially venerated as the patron of the dying, because he was found worthy to die in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Let us honor him so that he may nourish the work of Redemption in our hearts, and help us in completing it by a happy death. In the first centuries his feast was not celebrated, because then only the feasts of the martyrs were celebrated and principally because the celebration of his feast might lead the ignorant to believe that Joseph was the real father of Jesus.

(2.) The Feast of the Annunciation, March 25th, is one of the oldest feasts of the Church; it is a feast of our Lord, as well as of the Blessed Virgin. It is in commemoration of the moment when the Angel announced to the Blessed Virgin that she was to become the mother of God. It shows us Mary's intimate participation in the redemption of mankind. The Christian should call on Mary to assist him in amending his life.

According to an old tradition, on this day Adam was created, Christ became man, and died, and Mary attained to the dignity of Mother of God,—therefore we should honor her more than all the other Saints. To the mystery of this day woman owes her freedom from the oppression and contempt with which she was treated in heathen times. The exalted dignity of Mary elevated the honor of womanhood. We are reminded of the mystery of this feast three times a day by the ringing of the Angelus. This custom, it is true, was instituted only in the fourteenth century by Pope John XXII.; but how very appropriate it is to remind us three times a day of the Incarnation of Christ, the Son of God, who did so much for us, and whom we should not forget in the toils and labor of the day, but offer all to the Lord in gratitude.

(3.) The feast of the Seven Dolors, celebrated on the Friday preceding Palm Sunday, was instituted in the fifteenth century in expiation of the crimes of the Hussite image breakers, and other atrocities. It represents the Blessed Virgin as partaking in the work of Redemption and admonishes us like her, to meditate on the sufferings of Jesus. It is called the Feast of the Seven Dolors, because it reminds us not only of the sorrows of Mary at the foot of the cross, but also of her constant participation in the sufferings of Jesus from His birth to His crucifixion.

Even in the thirteenth century the Order of the Servites divided the sufferings of Mary into the following mysteries:

1st. The prophecy of Simeon in the Temple,

2d. The flight into Egypt,

3d. The three days loss of the boy Jesus in the Temple,

4th. The sight of her Divine Son carrying His heavy cross,

5th. The Crucifixion,

6th. The taking down from the Cross,

7th. The Burial of Jesus.

HOLY WEEK.

1. The last week of Lent in which sympathy with our suffering Lord, and a penitential spirit should reach its highest degree is called Holy Week, because in this week the Passion and death of our Lord is presented to us.

2. Until the seventh century, during the entire Holy Week, the faithful abstained from all servile work and lived a life of penance; later, the faithful attended Mass every day, practiced severe works of penance and celebrated the last three days as Sunday. They also endeavored to obliterate past evils,—prisoners were liberated; enemies were reconciled; penitents were forgiven, and debts were paid.

3. The Christian should endeavor in this week to be recollected in spirit, to meditate on the Passion of Christ, and to do penance for his sins. He should increase his love for God and his neighbor and fervently participate in the Divine Services of Holy Week.

4. On Palm Sunday, also on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday of Holy Week the Passion of our Lord is read or sung, each time from a different Evangelist. This custom is found in the earliest Christian times; it is to remind us that we should have the Passion of Christ as much as possible before our eyes during Holy Week.

As soon as the priest at the reading of the Passion comes to the place where the death of Christ is mentioned he, with all the servers at the altar, kneels down, in order, thereby, to express the mourning of the Church,—at the same time, also, to offer to God, in the name of the people, the worship due him, and to express their gratitude for the redemption of mankind by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. During the last three days of Holy Week, in some Churches where there are more priests, the Office of Matins and Lauds, or of the so-called Tenebrae is solemnly recited, the evening before, accompanied by the singing of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, bewailing the destruction of Jerusalem. When the Lamentations are sung fifteen candles in the form of a triangle are lit,—the one at the top being white, the others yellow. At the

end of each psalm a candle is extinguished, and, finally, those which are upon the altar, only the white one at the point of the triangle being left; at last it is carried behind the altar. At the close the wooden clappers are used and the burning candle is brought back again and placed on the altar. The significance of this ceremony is as follows:

(1) The gradual extinction of the candles is to remind us of the Prophets, who gave testimony of Christ, for which they were persecuted and put to death; it reminds us also of the Apostles and Disciples who hid themselves during His Passion.

(2) The fourteen unbleached wax candles tell us of His human nature; the one of white bleached wax, on the top, signifies His divine nature. All the unbleached candles are extinguished to show that His human nature died. The white candle is not quenched, to show that His divine nature did not die.

(3) The gloom caused by the extinction of the lights typifies the growing darkness, when Christ, the Light of the World, was taken; and the clapping made at the close of the Office is said to symbolize the confusion and earthquake which took place at our Lord's death.

(4) The reappearance of the white candle represents the resurrection of Christ.

The origin of the Tenebrae dates from the first centuries; the early Christians celebrated these three days by night watches, or vigils, with prayer and the

singing of psalms. Other vigils had long ceased to be kept; this vigil alone was retained until the tenth century, and celebrated at midnight; from this time until the fourteenth century it was celebrated at eight o'clock in the evening. Since the fourteenth century it has been kept as we have it at the present day. The Tenebrae is to remind us of the deep sorrow of the Church on the Passion and Death of Christ, and also her grief for the ingratitude of sinful man, to move him, therefore, to compassion for Christ's suffering and to do penance for his sins.

PALM SUNDAY.

1. Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday,—the name is derived from the blessing of palms, and the procession which takes place on this day.

2. The procession on Palm Sunday is of very ancient origin, dating even from the fourteenth century; it reminds us in the first place of the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, when the people went forth with palm branches to meet Him and to lead Him as their King in triumph into the city. So even now the faithful go in procession with palms in their hands to offer their homage with prayer and psalmody to Christ their King. This procession also reminds us of the solemn entry of Jesus into the heavenly Jerusalem, after having conquered death and hell by His crucifixion and resurrection, when upon His ascension all the just await-

ing Him in Limbo, adorned with the palms of merit, led Him into heaven, where adoring Him they offered their allegiance to Him as Lord and King. It reminds us also of that most solemn and great entry into the heavenly Jerusalem after the Last Judgment. All His faithful servants who have won the crown of victory under His banner will then offer Him their homage, and partake of His triumph and eternal glory.

3. The palms are blessed before the procession, because the Church wishes that whatever is used in the Divine Service should be blessed in order to remove the curse of sin, and to sanctify it for its sacred purpose. The Church prays especially for the bearers of these palms that they may have the grace of gaining many palms of victory over the enemy of salvation, and acquire many palms of good works, wherewith to follow the Lord in His triumphant entry, also that God may bless the houses in which these palms are preserved.

4. After blessing the palms the priest distributes them to the faithful as a sign that the Church shows the way to heaven, and must lead them in the battle against the enemy of their salvation. Then the palm bearers follow the cross in the procession, proclaiming thereby that they will fight and struggle all their life long in order to follow Jesus on the way of the Cross.

5. When the procession returns to the Church door, which is closed, it is opened only after being

struck three times with the staff of the cross. This teaches us that heaven was only opened by the death of Jesus on the Cross, and that we of our own strength cannot gain heaven, except through the merits of our crucified Jesus.

6. The faithful carry the palms home and preserve them, in order to partake of the blessings that the Church invokes on those dwellings where they are preserved. Thus the faithful express that even in their homes they will remain true foïlowers of Jesus Christ.

HOLY THURSDAY.

1. In the language of the Church, this day is called Coena Domini, the Lord's Supper. It reminds us of the great mystery of Christianity, which is presented to us by many characteristic ceremonies. On this day Christ partook of the Jewish Paschal lamb, a figure of that which was soon to be accomplished by His death on the Cross. He washed the feet of His disciples and to fulfill the type of the Paschal Lamb of the Old Law gave them Himself, His Body and Blood, under the appearances of bread and wine, and commanded them to do the same in commemoration of Him. By this command He established the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Sacrament of the Altar and the priesthood. He prayed for them, and on Mount Olivet in His agony sweat blood, was betrayed by Judas, made a prisoner, and throughout the whole night was maltreated.

2. The priest wears white vestments, white being the color of joy, but the psalm "Judica me" is omitted the same as in Masses for the dead. At the Gloria all the bells are rung, and then remain silent until Holy Saturday, wooden clappers being used instead. The Church wishes to express her joy on the institution of the Blessed Sacrament by the glad ringing of the bells even in the middle of Holy Week; on the other hand, the deep silence of all the bells is a sign of her deep sorrow; it also reminds us of the sorrow of the Apostles and their concealment during the Passion of Christ, for bells are emblematic of the Apostles. The wooden clappers may remind us of the tumult that reigned in Jerusalem during these days.

3. If there are more priests at a Church on this day, only one of them says Mass; the rest receive Communion from his hand. The single Mass celebrated in each church, the Communion distributed to the clergy and the faithful, present to us the Gospel scene when Jesus Christ, the only Consecrator of the last supper, and the Apostles were seated at the Eucharistic table. Formerly all the faithful were obliged to receive Holy Communion on this day.

4. In the Mass of this day, the Bishop consecrates the Holy Oils; namely, the Oil of the Sick, the Oil of the Catechumens and Holy Chrism. According to the testimony of Pope St. Fabian and St. Basil, the consecration of the Oils dates from the time of the Apostles. Of all the ceremonies of the

year it is one of the most beautiful and mystical. Even in the fifth century it was a decree of the Church to consecrate the Holy Oils on Holy Thursday. This day is chosen because on this day Christ instituted the Blessed Sacrament which is the center, yea, even the very source of all the Sacraments, and because at the same time He established the priesthood, thereby making the Apostles and their successors the dispensers of the Sacraments and all the graces that flow therefrom. The Oils are blessed with great solemnity; the Bishop is surrounded by twelve priests, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, and many others of the clergy. The Bishop and priests breathe three times upon the Oil of the Catechumens and the Chrism, meaning by this action that the power of the Holy Spirit is about to descend upon the Oils; after the consecration is complete they salute the Holy Oils three times, with the words: "Hail, Holy Chrism! Hail, Holy Oil!" The prayers and blessings, as well as the breathing upon the Oils, in fact the whole form of this consecration, was used by Gregory the Great in the sixth century and for the greater part may date back to apostolic times.

The Holy Oils are used in administering some of the Sacraments, and in consecrations of greater importance, such as altars, churches, chalices, bells, etc.

Wherever oil is used it has the property of strengthening, healing wounds, or of, at least, alleviating pain; it is also used for illuminating purposes

therefore is a fitting symbol of the different effects produced by the holy Sacraments and canonical consecrations. Balsam which is mixed with oil to form the chrism is also significant, on account of its sweet odor and its property of healing as well as preserving from corruption. Even in the Old Testament oil was often used as a symbolic sign; and the New Testament testifies, plainly enough, that the Apostles also anointed with oil when administering the Sacraments; and ever since, anointing with oil has been in use, and the Holy Oils carefully preserved and held in veneration.

The Holy Oils must be distributed from the Episcopal See on the same day to the different parishes of the diocese. This shows that it is from the bishop that the sacramental graces of the whole diocese emanate; he is the head, and the cathedral is the mother church of the diocese.

5. Two Hosts are consecrated on Holy Thursday, one of which is reserved for the following day, Good Friday, because no real Mass may be said on this day. This Host with all the small, consecrated Hosts that are in the tabernacle, at the close of the ceremonies are carried in procession to the repository adorned with flowers, where they are preserved until the following day. This, as well as many other ceremonies on this day, reminds us of early Christian times. In those days the Blessed Sacrament was not reserved on the main altar, but every day after the Divine Service was carried to a place

specially prepared for it, and then the altar was stripped. This custom, no doubt, is retained on Holy Thursday only to remind us that Christ, after His last supper, retired to Mount Olivet with His Disciples to begin His Passion, and was there forcibly dragged from their midst. It is customary for the faithful to visit the churches on Holy Thursday and adore our Lord hidden in the Blessed Sacrament.

6. After the Blessed Sacrament has been removed to the repository, the altars are stripped. Everything is removed excepting the candlesticks and the veiled crucifix; the tabernacle is left open, all lights are extinguished. While stripping the altar the priest prays the twenty-first psalm; the bare altar mourns because our Lord has been taken away, and reminds us of the desolation and deep sorrow of the Disciples, on having lost their Master. It is also a figure of our Lord Himself, Who after being stripped of His garments, despoiled of His beauty, yes, even of all human resemblance, suffered a most cruel death.

7. In some Cathedral churches, and Monasteries, the closing ceremony on Holy Thursday is the washing of the feet, called "Mandatum" from the words of the first antiphon sung during the ceremony—"Mandatum novum," etc. "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another," whence our English name, "Maundy Thursday." The Apostles also followed this command, and the custom has been retained to the present day.

The priest or prelate of the Church, assisted by deacon and sub-deacon washes the feet of twelve old men. Girt with white linen, kneeling, he washes the right foot of each, then dries it and kisses it. The Pope washes the feet of thirteen, all of whom are priests.

This ceremony is in grateful remembrance of the washing of the Apostles' feet by our Lord, and represents that bond of union and love which should exist in the Church between the shepherd and his flock; it admonishes the faithful to imitate the example of our Lord by the practice of humility.

Many Christian princes, and superiors of convents, follow this custom, by washing the feet of twelve of their subjects.

GOOD FRIDAY.

1. Good Friday, in the language of the Church is called "Parasceve," that is, the day of preparation; the Jews called this day so, because they made preparations for the Pasch, which began with the evening. On this day the true Paschal Lamb, Jesus Christ, of Whom the other lambs were only a figure, was slain on Calvary.

2. This day places before our eyes the most important event of Christianity, namely, the death of Jesus Christ, whereby the whole world was redeemed; nevertheless it is not celebrated as a feast day, because a festal celebration is always accom-

panied with feelings of joy. The Church on this day gives herself up to mourning and sadness over the Passion and death of our Lord, and admonishes the faithful to do the same. The day reminds us specially of the price of our redemption, showing us the enormity and malice of sin. What Christ gained for us through His passion is revealed to us on Easter day, for only through His resurrection did He complete His work of redemption, and in reality conquer death. A festive celebration on this day is really not possible, because the nucleus of every festive celebration is wanting, namely, the Sacrifice of the Mass. Therefore the Church has, from the earliest times, celebrated Good Friday in silence and sadness, with solemn gravity by a strict fast and by somber mourning ceremonies. Mass is the most joyful ceremony that man can perform, but there is no joy in the world today when we celebrate the memory of the crucifixion of our Savior, therefore the Church never celebrated this day as a festival.

3. As a good child commemorates the anniversary of the death of beloved parents not in a festive manner, but in quiet mourning and grateful remembrance, so the devout Christian on Good Friday remembers with sadness and compunction of heart the death of Jesus and his own sins. He contemplates the Eternal High Priest who offers himself as a Sacrifice amidst indescribable torture, and by His obedience even unto death on the Cross, removed the

curse of sin from mankind. He acknowledges the blessings of the Cross and resolves, from now on, to follow Jesus on the way to Calvary, to carry his cross willingly and to be obedient to the Divine Will even unto death.

4. Clothed in black vestments, the color of deepest mourning, the priest and his assistants come forth to the sanctuary without lights or incense; on the bare altar stands a veiled crucifix. Before this they prostrate themselves on the steps of the altar, in perfect silence. This is the Introit of Good Friday the deepest abasement and humiliation at the sight of the ignominy and annihilation of Jesus on the Cross. The deepest mourning for the death of Jesus the keenest remorse for the sins which were the cause of all this degradation. Meanwhile a white linen cloth is spread upon the altar, it reminds us of the winding sheet of our Lord. The priest rises and going to the corner of the altar reads the prophecy of Osee, then the tract following the prayer, and the history of God commanding the eating of the Paschal Lamb, again followed by a tract. Then comes the chanting of the history of the Passion of our Lord, according to the Gospel of St. John.

5. After the reading of the Passion, solemn prayers for the Church and for men of all states and conditions are sung, to which a special prayer and genuflection is added. The following prayers are said:

1st. For the Church; 2d, for the Pope; 3d, for all bishops, priests and other ecclesiastics, as well as for all the children of God; 4th, for the Roman emperor (this prayer is omitted now for there are no more Roman emperors); 5th, for the Catechumens; 6th, for the erring, the sick, the hungry, and those in prison, for travelers and those on sea; 7th, for heretics and schismatics; 8th, for the Jews, and, 9th, for the Heathen. Before each prayer "Oremus flectamus genua" (let us pray and bend the knee) is sung, whereupon all kneel, and at the word Levate (arise) all arise. By these prayers the Church wishes to express her ardent and urgent supplications. At the prayer for the Jews we do not bend the knee, because they bent their knees in mockery and derision before our Lord when they were about to crucify Him. Also at the close of the prayer for the Jews the "Amen" is omitted, because this supplication will never be entirely fulfilled until the end of the world. By these prayers the Church wishes to reveal her holy charity to all mankind and her anxious desire to enfold them in her motherly arms and make them happy. This desire of the Church is awakened specially today by the example of Jesus, Who, hanging on the Cross with outstretched arms, wishes to draw all mankind to Him and to redeem them. If you are a true child of the Church, then you must forgive your enemies from the bottom of your heart, and no one must be excluded from this charity. It is in this spirit that the Church prays today.

6. Taking off the chasuble, the priest takes th cross which from the evening before Passion Sun day has been veiled, and standing on the floor a the Epistle side of the sanctuary he uncovers th top of the cross, saying:

"Behold the wood of the cross on which the sa vation of the world hung." (Ecce lignum Crucis, i quo pependit salus mundi.) The choir sings: Com let us adore (Venite adoremus), when all but th celebrant fall upon their knees. Coming up th steps of the altar, on the Epistle side, he uncover the right arm of the cross, repeating the sam words in a higher key; going to the middle of th altar, he uncovers the whole cross with the sam words in a still higher tone.

The unveiling and exposition of the cross is symbol of Christ stripped of His garments, nailed t the Cross, raised thereon, and exposed to the peopl The triple unveiling and chanting each time in higher key is a representation of the gradual mani festation of the Sacrifice of the Cross. In the Ol Testament this manifestation was not fully under stood; this is shown by the almost entirely veile crucifix, and the low pitch of voice in the chant. O Golgotha the Sacrifice of the Cross was accom plished, but there were only few to acknowledge i therefore a further unveiling of the cross and higher pitch of voice in the chant. The cross is no raised on high in the Church that all nations ma look upon it; this is indicated by the complete un

veiling of the cross and the still higher pitch of voice in the chant. The Christian should consider this threefold call of the Church as an admonition to do penance. Behold the cross on which the salvation of the world hung, also for your sins; cast yourself down, repent of your sins, and mortify your evil inclinations.

Then the priest brings the cross to the place prepared for it before the altar, and, out of respect, removes his shoes and genuflecting three times, at intervals, on both knees, kisses the feet of the crucifix. The acolytes and the faithful also make the adoration of the cross. During the adoration the "Improperia" (Reproaches) are sung, in which God reproaches His people with their ingratitude for the numberless benefits He bestowed upon them, in preparing for Him the most excruciating and ignominious death. Even in the earliest times the true Cross on which Christ was crucified was exposed at Jerusalem for veneration. In order that the faithful in distant countries might offer their veneration and homage to the sign of their redemption, this solemn unveiling and veneration was introduced into the entire Church. The same ceremony was used in the fifth century, and has come down to us without any perceptible change. The threefold genuflection reminds us of the three falls of Jesus under the weight of the cross, as well as the threefold mockery of the Jews, the heathen, and on Calvary. The Improperia are

sung partly in Greek, partly in Latin, not only because they originated at a time when the Greek and Latin churches were still united, but also because all nations should be united under the Cross in the same faith. It is not necessary to tell a Catholic that this veneration is not paid to the wood of the cross, but to Christ Who was sacrificed on the Cross. He should endeavor not only to make this veneration exteriorly but also with a contrite heart; he should consider that these reproaches also apply to him; that even every day he receives God's graces and benefits, and in return almost daily offends God, his Benefactor.

7. After the adoration of the cross follows the so-called Mass of the Presanctified. It is not a Mass in the true sense of the word, as no consecration takes place, only the Host, consecrated the day before, is consumed by the celebrant; for today the world stands appalled at the remembrance of our Lord's death.

The Blessed Sacrament is now borne in procession from the chapel, or altar, where it was placed the day before. While the choir sings the hymn, "Vexilla Regis," the celebrant places it upon the altar, pours wine into the chalice, incenses the altar, washes his hands, says some of the customary prayers, sings the Pater Noster, then elevates the Blessed Sacrament, for adoration, breaks it as usual, says the preparatory prayer and communicates; then leaves the altar without further prayer. This so-called Mass has no Offertory or Elevation proper,

for the elevation of the Sacred Host is nothing more than an exposition of the Blessed Particle for adoration, a custom which was general in former times; this custom, in a somewhat different form, still prevails. With this elevation there is no consecration, consequently there is no real Mass.

The Church is engaged this day with the bloody sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary; therefore she omits the Unbloody Sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

HOLY SATURDAY.

1. When God finished the work of creation, he rested on the Sabbath day. When He ended His work of redemption he rested in the tomb. One was but a figure of the other. In the early days of Christianity Mass was not said on this day. The entire Divine Service we have it now was then celebrated in the night from Holy Saturday to Easter Sunday as the Vigil of Easter. The preparation for Easter, the change from sadness to joy, is noticeable; gradually a new life is perceptible in the spirit of the Church.

2. The ceremonies of the vigil begin with the blessing of the new fire struck from flint. Formerly fire was struck daily from flint, then blessed and used to light the lamps of the church, but since the eleventh century this benediction was reserved exclusively for Holy Saturday, when this ceremony is performed with greater solemnity, on account of its

significance. As the sparks of fire come forth from the flint and diffuse light, so Christ comes forth glorious from the tomb to enkindle and illuminate the world. Christ is the stone which the Jews rejected, but which became the head of the corner. With the blessing of the new fire is united the blessing of the five grains of incense prepared for the Easter Candle.

3. In this new fire, whatever remains from the previous year of the Holy Oils is consumed, and the new Oils blessed on Holy Thursday are used from now on. The fountain of divine grace has its source in the sacred wounds of our Redeemer. As in this holy season these sacred wounds are placed before us anew, so also the graces which flow from this source are typified by the renewal of the Holy Oils.

4. All lights in the church are extinguished; the new fire and the grains of incense are carried in procession into the church. This is to signify that through the resurrection of Christ new light and life has come into the Church. Upon entering the church, the deacon, who carries the long staff with its three candles in the form of a triangle, lights one of them, and sings in a low tone "Lumen Christi" (Light of Christ), to which is replied "Deo gratias" (thanks be to God). In the middle of the church the second candle is lit, at the high altar the third one, and at the same time, the same words are sung, each time in a higher key. This

leading of the new light into the church is in contrast to the solemn unveiling of the cross on Good Friday. As this reminds the faithful of the death of Christ on the Cross, and awakens sentiments of compassion and exhorts them to do penance, so the introduction of the candles reminds us of the resurrection of Jesus; and a joyous hope which gradually like a beam of light penetrates the sorrowing Christian, awakens new life and exhorts him to imbibe new hope that with Christ he may lead a new life of virtue and piety.

The successive lighting of the candles, the gradual entry into the church, and the increasing pitch of tone in the chant, signify the repeated apparition of Jesus after His resurrection, whereby His followers were filled more and more with joy. It is also an appropriate symbol of the illumination of the world by the gradual propagation of the Gospel.

The triple light on one staff tells first, how God the Father was revealed to man in the beginning of the world; secondly, it recalls how God the Son was revealed to the Jews, by the prophets, and, thirdly, it typifies the revelation of God the Holy Ghost to the world. Thus it speaks of the unity and trinity of God revealed at the time of the Apostles.

The response, "Deo gratias," expresses the joyous gratitude for these graces. All the faithful should join in these thanks; for if it were not for this Light of the World, we would still be in the darkness of heathendom.

5. Then follows the solemn blessing of the Paschal candle. In the first centuries this ceremony was performed only in the principal or Cathedral churches. Later on Pope Zosimus in 417 allowed this privilege to all parish churches.

The Paschal Candle represents our Lord risen from the dead; therefore it must be of pure white wax to typify His pure immaculate humanity. It reminds us of the pillar of cloud which led the Israelites out of Egypt through the Red sea into the promised land. So Christ liberates us from the slavery of Satan by baptism; and if we faithfully follow His guidance He will surely lead us into the promised land of eternal bliss. In early times the offices of the entire year, which began with Easter, were inscribed on the Paschal Candle. Later, as their number increased, they were written on parchment, and attached to it sometimes by means of one of the grains of incense.

The blessing of this candle consists of a sublime canticle on the resurrection of our Lord (Exultet), which, from all accounts, is attributed to St. Augustine. During the chanting of the Exultet, the five grains of incense are inserted in the candle, in the form of a cross; later, it is lit at the triangle, and shortly after, all the other lights that had been extinguished are lit in like manner.

The five grains of incense remind us of the five sacred wounds which Christ received on the Cross and which marks He retained after His resurrec-

tion. From these wounds arises constantly a sacrificial fragrance, to our heavenly Father, pleading for sinful man, which is typified by the incense. The lighting of the Paschal Candle and the other lights represent Christ as the Light that came into the world to enlighten all men who are not willfully blind to the light. All mankind should partake of this newly risen light, in the new life of Christ. This is the wish of the Church as expressed at the close of the canticle. The Paschal Candle is placed on the Gospel side of the altar and remains there until the Feast of the Ascension; during this time it is often lit at Divine Service.

6. The blessing of the candle is followed by the reading of the twelve prophecies, i. e., lessons from the Old Testament, which contain prototypes of Christ. These prototypes were partly fulfilled by the resurrection of Christ, and continue partly to be fulfilled by the spiritual resurrection of the sinner. This spiritual resurrection is especially accomplished by the Sacraments; therefore the blessing of the water follows immediately after the prophecies, which serve as a preparation.

Formerly the number of prophecies varied; the number twelve refers probably to the twelve Apostles. Then, too, they place before us how the kingdom of Christ, the holy Catholic Church, rests upon the Prophets and the Apostles; the former prepared the way while the latter propagated the faith throughout the world.

7. The spiritual resurrection is accomplished by baptism, therefore on the Vigil of Easter in the first Christian centuries, the baptismal water was blessed and the Catechumens were solemnly baptised. In the course of time, this solemn baptism ceased, and only the blessing of the Easter water remained; it is probably, of apostolic origin. The ceremonies of the blessing of Easter water are greatly similar to those of Baptism. The water is first withdrawn from the power of Satan by exorcism, the laying on of hands and the sign of the cross. Then the burning candle is immersed three times in the water, and at each time the priest in a higher key invokes the power of the Holy Ghost upon the water. This immersion of the Paschal candle reminds us of Christ immersed in the waters of the Jordan at His Baptism. The intoning three times, each time in a higher key is in harmony with the unveiling of the cross, on the preceding day, and the solemn introduction of the newly consecrated fire. We are to understand thereby that it is the same Christ Who died for us on the Cross, and who through His resurrection brought new life into the Church, imparts life-giving power to this water; the breathing upon the water is also a symbol of the communication of grace. The faithful present are sprinkled with this blessed water to remind them of their baptism and to exhort them to renew the graces of baptism by prayer, and to be cleansed from their sins. The Easter water is also distributed to the faithful in order, that not only their hearts but also their houses may be cleansed

from the curse of sin. A sufficient quantity of this Easter water is retained for Baptism, it is mixed with the oil of the Catechumens and Chrism, and preserved for use in the baptismal font. This mingling of the water with oil is to typify the fullness of the Holy Spirit which moves over this water and is imparted to the newly baptised. Formerly, solemn baptism took place after the blessing of the Easter water, which even now sometimes occurs if there be any present to be baptised.

8. Then the celebrant and assistants prostrate themselves before the altar, while the choir sings the Litany of All Saints. At the words "peccatores" (sinners) all arise and go to the sacristy to prepare for Mass. The Church calls upon all the Saints to implore the grace of God upon those to be baptised, and to remind the faithful that they have been received into the Church and into the Communion of Saints by baptism, and are one day to become Saints. The prostration before the altar, an expression of humble and fervent prayer, is to remind us that Christ still lies in the tomb, but will soon rise again, and that all mankind through baptism or penance will arise with Him from sin and death to a new life.

9. The Mass of Holy Saturday now begins in white vestments. At the Gloria, the bells and the organ are heard again, and the Alleluia which was not heard since Septuagesima Sunday is sung three times, each time in a higher key. No Introit, Credo,

Agnus Dei or Communion is sung; immediately after the Communion a short Vesper service follows. The threefold Alleluia appropriately follows the joyous ringing of the bell to exhort the Christian to praise the Lord and to participate in the great joy. The abridgement of this Mass comes to us from the earliest times. Throughout the whole Mass expressions of joy predominate, therefore the altars are somewhat more richly ornamented. The ringing of the bells is an expression of this joy; it reminds us of the Apostles who since the seizure of our Lord were silent, but now, through His resurrection, receive new life and announce their joy to the world. It is fitting that the faithful should wake from their sadness and join in this ringing of the bell as well as the threefold Alleluia (Praise the Lord).

EASTER.

1. Easter Sunday is the greatest feast of the year. St. Leo calls it the feast of feasts. On this day we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which he completed the work of redemption.

2. God Himself in the Old Testament commanded the celebration of this feast in grateful commemoration of the wonderful deliverance of the Jews from the slavery of Egypt, and especially because the destroying angel passed those houses by, that were sprinkled with the blood of the Easter

lamb, hence the name Pasch or Passover. The Christians have retained this feast in grateful remembrance of the completed work of redemption from the slavery of sin.

3. This feast is not celebrated on the same day each year, but always on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox. All the movable feasts are regulated by the time of Easter.

4. Easter falls very appropriately in the springtime. As in this season of the year all nature awakens to new life and resurrection, so the Church likewise celebrates the actual resurrection of our Lord, and indeed the spirtual resurrection of many of her children.

5. Even in the early days of Christianity it was customary to bless food the use of which was forbidden in Lent, so that the new food might not be injurious to the health of the body, or, rather, that it should not excite sensuality and thereby injure the soul. In this also the Church wishes to show that on Easter the entire man, body and soul, should arise to a new life in God. Meat reminds us of the Easter lamb, eggs of the resurrection, and bread of the heavenly bread in the Blessed Sacrament, which Christ instituted at Easter.

6. The jubilant rejoicing of Easter is expressed not only in the oft repeated Alleluia, but also in the Mass and the Divine Office, more especially during

the octave, and during the so-called Easter time, which lasts until the first Sunday after Pentecost, that is, to Trinity Sunday. According to apostolic tradition the faithful in early times prayed standing during this joyous season to show that they also had risen to a new life in Christ. Instead of the usual Angelus during Easter-tide, morning, noon and evening, the Antiphon "Regina Coeli" is said and that too, standing. Every Christian true to his faith participates in the Easter joys. Festive Divine Service and the Alleluias replace the lamentations and mourning of the past week. Friends and acquaintances greet each other with a joyful Alleluia, and even in the humblest cottage, a better meal takes the place of the fasts of Lent. Newly awakened nature enhances these Easter joys.

It is an oldtime custom in Eastern as well as Western countries to distribute on Easter the so-called Easter eggs variously colored. The egg is a symbol of the resurrection, for as the bird comes out of the shell alive, so came forth the living Christ from the tomb, and so shall we, one day, come forth from the grave. In some countries it is also customary to make presents of toy lambs, called Easter lambs, bearing a little banner as a reminder of the true Easter Lamb Who conquered death.

THE OCTAVE OF EASTER.

1. As in the Old Law the Jews celebrated Easter for eight days, it was also prescribed for the Christians to keep this octave as a continuous feast. Later

it was limited to three days, and at present in this country to only one; while in some European countries two days are kept.

2. The celebration of this octave serves to enhance the glory of Easter. For eight days the joyful event should be continually before our eyes, to strengthen our faith in the resurrection of Christ; therefore the Gospels of these days relate to the various apparitions of our risen Lord.

3. On the Saturday after Easter the so-called "Agnus Dei" are distributed in Rome. They are little disks of white wax, solemnly blessed by the Pope. The face shows a lamb with a cross and the inscription: Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi (Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world), beside the name and year of the reigning Pontiff. On the reverse side, is the image of a saint. In early times it was customary to present the newly baptised with a souvenir of wax representing the Lamb of God. From this may have originated the custom that the Pope solemnly blessed on one of the days of the octave images made out of the Easter candle of the preceding year, and distributed them on the above mentioned Saturday. Now it is customary for the Pope to bless them only in the first year of his pontificate and every seventh year following. The significance of these "Agnus Dei" is shown by the inscription as well as by the tenor of the prayers used at the blessing. They represent first the pure immaculate

Lamb of God, Who redeemed us by His blood; they are also symbolical of the newly baptised who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and have become snow white lambs in the fold of Christ. The newly baptised received thereby a token of their covenant with God and, at the same time, the blessing of the Church to enable them to remain faithful to this covenant.

The efficacy of the Agnus Dei, as expressed in the prayers at the blessing and verified by history, must indeed be rich in graces. A bull of Gregory XIII. forbids the painting or gilding of Agnus Dei blessed by the Pope, under ban of excommunication. It is also forbidden to sell them; they should be preserved or worn with veneration.

LOW SUNDAY.

1. Low Sunday forms the close of the octave of Easter. Formerly the Neophytes or newly baptized appeared during Easter week in white robes, with a burning candle in their hand. Both of these were given to them at baptism as an admonition to preserve their baptismal innocence and faithfully to observe the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. In order to make public profession of their readiness and also to express their joy, they wore the white garments during the whole octave, and only at its close on Saturday, sometimes even on the Sunday after Easter, laid them aside, and gave up their candle amid the prayers of the Church.

Hence the name in the Missal and Breviary, "Dominica in Albis" (Sunday in White). The name Low Sunday emphasizes the contrast between the great Easter solemnity and the Sunday which ends the octave.

2. This Sunday is also called Quasimodo geniti (like newly born), because the Introit of the Mass begins with these words. Every day during the octave prayers are said for the newly baptised, and on the last day of the octave they are admonished, like the newly born, to long for the milk of heavenly wisdom, that they may grow up in the living faith, conquer the flesh and thereby obtain the peace of heaven. This admonition applies to all the faithful, for after a fast of forty days, and after a true celebration of Easter, by receiving Holy Communion worthily, all Christians should be spiritually born anew.

3. It is customary in many places to have First Holy Communion on Low Sunday, and as a rule this is accompanied by a renewal of baptismal vows. This is a ceremony of great importance for children, as well as impressive and instructive for their elders. When the communicants, clothed in white, with lighted tapers, approach the holy table, how forcibly it admonishes us also to receive Holy Communion with pure hearts penetrated with faith, hope and charity. Let it remind us of our first Holy Communion, and the resolutions we then made.

In former times Christians publicly celebrated the anniversary of their baptism. We should never forget our baptismal day, but ever remember its graces and blessings with gratitude, and often renew our baptismal vows.

COMMEMORATIONS.

1. With Low Sunday the proximate subsequent commemoration of Easter closes; the remote subsequent commemoration lasts until the close of the octave of Ascension. This time reminds us of the forty days which Christ spent upon earth after His resurrection, in order to further instruct His disciples and confirm them in the faith. Easter joy still continues during this period, as is shown in all the devotions and feasts of the Church; it tends to elevate the heart of every good Christian.

2. The Easter Cycle really closes with the octave of Ascension, but not the Easter joy; the Alleluia and the Antiphon, "Regina coeli laetare" (Queen of Heaven rejoice), remain even through the octave of Pentecost, because Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Ghost, completes the work of Christ's redemption upon earth. Christ, it is true, had by His ascension withdrawn His visible presence from us, but He withdrew to send us the Holy Ghost.

ROGATION DAYS.

1. Even in the earliest times of Christianity, we find where one or more communities under the guidance of their spiritual directors went in procession, praying and singing psalms, to an appointed place to perform solemn devotional exercises. These processions were held sometimes on special occasions, sometimes on certain days of the year; to the latter, we class the procession of St. Mark's day and the Rogation days.

2. The procession of St. Mark's day is said to have been instituted by Pope Gregory the Great at the time when, in consequence of a great inundation, a pestilence was raging in Rome and vicinity. The symptoms of this dread disease were, yawning or sneezing until the victim dropped dead. Hence originated the custom of saying "God bless you" when one sneezes; also of making the sign of the cross on the mouth when yawning. To ward off this terrible disease Pope Gregory commanded a solemn procession to be held, and appointed it to be solemnized yearly on the 25th of April; it must have been, however, an ancient custom, but only became general on the occasion of the pestilence. In the beginning of spring, when all nature awakes, this procession is held to beseech Almighty God to avert various natural calamities—the dangers of drouth, storm and tempest. The faithful having been reconciled to God at Easter, now beg to be reconciled with nature, in order to receive not the curse of sin

resting upon it through the fall of Adam, but instead the blessings of our heavenly Father. This procession then is really the celebration of the resurrection of nature. It is placed upon the 25th of April, being the first day upon which Easter cannot occur; for the spiritual resurrection must be accomplished before the curse of sin can be taken from nature. The Feast of St. Mark, celebrated on this day, is of much later origin and has no connection with it.

3. On the three days preceding the Feast of the Ascension, processions are also held, therefore this week is called "Rogation Week," from the Latin "rogare"—to ask or to pray. The holy bishop Mamertus of Vienne, France, was the first to introduce these processions towards the close of the fifth century to avert various temporal calamities; they found imitation in France, then gradually throughout Christendom. Formerly these days were days of fast and abstinence, as well as of rest from servile work.

4. These processions have a twofold object, namely, to be reconciled with God by penance, and by prayer to obtain new graces and benefits. Our prayers should be for temporal and spiritual blessings: the prosperity of the harvest, preservation from evil, the love of God and freedom from sin. All these requests are contained in the Litany of the Saints, which is prayed on these days, either in the church or in the processions. The

special Mass for these days is read in violet, the penitential color, and is intended to increase the confidence of the faithful, and to enhance the efficacy of their prayers.

5. Processions may be held on other extraordinary occasions to avert great calamities; their celebration is the same as those of Rogation week.

ASCENSION DAY.

1. This feast is of apostolic origin and is celebrated forty days after Easter (on Thursday), because Christ ascended into heaven from Mount Olivet forty days after His resurrection. The Son of God had accomplished His mission in this world; He now returns triumphant and victorious over death and hell, to His heavenly Father. With Him ascend the souls of the Just detained in Limbo ardently longing for this day. Heaven is again opened; Christ has established His Church on earth and prepared her for the coming of the Holy Ghost, whom He is to send.

2. Like Mary and the disciples, who saw Christ ascend into heaven, and ardently longed to follow Him, so should we, on this day, awaken a great longing for our heavenly home.

3. The Paschal candle which has been lit at all solemn Divine Services since Easter is extinguished on this day after the Gospel, and lit no more during the services. This typifies the withdrawal of Christ's visible presence from His Church.

OTHER FEASTS

which belong to the subsequent commemoration of Easter.

1. The feasts of some of the instruments of the Passion of our Lord, viz: the feast of the Lance and Nails which falls on the Friday after Low Sunday (if it has not been celebrated during Lent); the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross on the 3d of May, and the Feast of the Crown of Thorns on the 5th of May.

These instruments of the Passion are trophies of the victory of Christ, therefore triumphant feasts of the arisen Redeemer.

Feasts of our Lord's particular sufferings, or instruments of His Passion, are celebrated on the Fridays in Lent, e. g.: the feast of the Crown of Thorns; the Flagellation; the five, Wounds, the Precious Blood.

2. No feast of the Blessed Virgin is celebrated during the Paschal season, because Mary is so intimately united with her newly risen Divine Son, that her life forms, as it were, one with His.

3. On the contrary we celebrate the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph on the third Sunday after Easter. While St. Joseph could not be a witness of Christ's Passion, he has now become a witness of His triumph. With his divine Foster-Son he enters heaven never more to leave His side, and there, by his powerful intercession, becomes the foster-father of mankind.

4. Besides these feasts we find in this season the feasts of many martyrs, as well as that of the Evangelist St. Mark and the Apostles Philip and James, who also suffered martyrdom.

The martyrs imitated most perfectly the love of our Redeemer. Christ died for love of man, the martyrs died for love of God. If, then, Easter reminds us of the infinite love of Jesus Christ, so the feasts of the martyrs should remind us of that ardent reciprocal love, which makes us always ready to sacrifice everything, even life itself, for love of God.

THIRD FESTAL CYCLE.

1. The third Festal Cycle is the season of Pentecost, which embraces the time from Ascension to the first Sunday of Advent. Pentecost forms the central point of this festal cycle. The octave of Ascension, as well as the feast itself, belongs, it is true, to the Easter season, but with it begins also the preparation for Pentecost, for it reminds us of the time when the Apostles were at Jerusalem preparing for the coming of the Holy Ghost. This octave with the Friday preceding Pentecost forms the remote preparation, the vigil is the proximate preparation. The octave of Pentecost is the proximate subsequent commemoration; with the Feast of Trinity Sunday begins the remote subsequent commemoration, which lasts until Advent.

2. The Pentecost Cycle represents Christ to us as King. The work of redemption is accomplished, the kingdom of God is established upon earth. Triumphantly the Son of God enters into heaven, leading the just, whom He has released from Limbo. In heaven He is enthroned at the right hand of His Father; thence He sent the Holy Ghost to extend His kingdom on earth, which was to continue until the end of time.

3. The Holy Ghost not only maintains and propagates the Church, but also pours His gifts individually into the hearts of those who have begun to live a supernatural life and are free from sin. It should be the duty of every Christian in this festal cycle to implore the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and in return to correspond faithfully with these graces, so that he may gather abundant merits for eternity and always be ready to meet his eternal Judge.

PREPARATION.

1. After His resurrection, Christ frequently made known to His Apostles that He was about to leave them and that He would then send them the Paraclete, and thus sought to prepare them for Pentecost. The Apostles were to rejoice not only at the resurrection of their Master but were also to be made susceptible of the graces imparted by the gifts of the Holy Ghost. The time therefore between Easter and Pentecost has a twofold interpretation: on the one hand, as being the subsequent commemoration of Easter, on the other hand, as a preparation for Pentecost. The celebration of Easter and Pentecost is so closely united, that the Easter celebration extends beyond Pentecost even to Trinity Sunday. This is to signify that the Easter joy reaches its perfection only at Pentecost. From Ascension day, however, the predominant thought is Pentecost, therefore this time is considered the true preparation for Pentecost.

2. Like the Apostles, the faithful should endeavor to be recollected and practice mortification during the time from Ascension to Pentecost; they should long ardently for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and continue to pray for them. We are especially reminded of this in the Mass and Gospel of the Sunday preceding Pentecost.

3. Saturday, the Vigil of Pentecost, forms the proximate preparation of this festal cycle. Formerly on this day solemn baptism was administered the same as on Holy Saturday, therefore its celebration has much similarity with that of Holy Saturday. Six prophecies chosen from those of Holy Saturday are read on this day. It was only after the coming of the Holy Ghost that these prophecies reached their fulfillment, and the Old Testament its perfection.

Although there is no fast during the entire Easter season, this vigil has been a day of fast and abstinence from the earliest times. This is to admonish us that we should practice mortification, as well as prayer, in order to become partakers of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

PENTECOST.

1. The word Pentecost is a Greek word meaning fifty, and signifies the fiftieth day after Easter. On the fiftieth day after the Passover, God gave the Israelites the ten commandments on Mount Sinai. In remembrance of this, Pentecost was celebrated in

the Old Law on the fiftieth day after Easter. On the fiftieth day after the resurrection of our Redeemer, the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles and enkindled in their hearts a zeal that inflamed the whole world. In commemoration of this event, Christians celebrate Pentecost on the fiftieth day after Easter.

By the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, the covenant between God and His chosen people received an actual outward sign; in like manner the covenant of the New Law received its consummation through the coming of the Holy Ghost. From that time on began its development and propagation; therefore the Feast of Pentecost is justly styled the birthday of our Holy Church.

2. The Feast of Pentecost introduced and celebrated by the Apostles was always considered one of the greatest feasts of the Ecclesiastical Year. It admonishes us to keep the Ten Commandments faithfully; for these Commandments are not to cease in the New Law, but rather to be performed in a more perfect manner. It reminds us of the descent of the Holy Ghost, in which we became partakers by the Sacrament of Confirmation. On Pentecost we should specially implore the Holy Ghost to renew in our souls the graces of this sacrament. On this day the Holy Ghost assumed supreme guidance of the Church, and became the dispenser of divine grace, therefore every faithful child should on this feast offer to God a heart overflowing with gratitude

for the priceless gift of faith, as well as for the numberless graces and benefits received through the Church.

THE SEASON AFTER PENTECOST.

1. The octave of Pentecost forms the proximate subsequent commemoration of the feast. The remote subsequent commemoration begins with Trinity Sunday and extends to Advent. In this period of subsequent commemoration the Church shows the working of the Holy Spirit, and how the faith is wonderfully spread all over the world, dispensing graces everywhere, and finally leading all faithful Christians to their eternal destiny. In the same manner the Holy Ghost operates in all individual hearts that are intimately united with the Church. Charity is expanded, Grace is increased and our claim to heaven becomes more and more assured.

2. The week after Pentecost is also Ember week, in which the Church zealously exhorts us to coöperate with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is not enough that the Holy Ghost imparts His graces, we must also do our part, by subduing our evil inclinations, and through prayer and good works fructify the divine grace in our souls.

3. The Sundays after Pentecost, forming the remote subsequent commemoration, complete the Ecclesiastical Year.

On the feasts of our Lord which occur in this season we no longer commemorate the deeds of His life, but rather the fruits thereof. We now celebrate and partake of the treasures of grace bestowed on the Church by Christ which He merited by His life, sufferings and death; these form her perpetual life, ornament and triumph.

On most feasts of the Blessed Virgin, of which there are many in this season, we glorify Mary as the Queen and Mother of the kingdom of God upon earth; she is the Star of the Sea which guides the Church, the Bark of Peter, into safe harbor. Other feasts of the Blessed Virgin are the germ from which the Ecclesiastical Year unfolds.

The feasts of the Apostles occur very appropriately in this season, for they are the foundation upon which the Church is erected and established. The other Saints whose feasts occur in this season testify to the holiness of the Church, through whose guidance they have reached the goal. Many of them were active in the propagation of the faith, and in establishing our holy Church. For all Christians their lives serve as an encouraging example, worthy of imitation.

4. This entire subsequent commemoration may be divided into three parts:

(1) The first period comprises the Sundays after Pentecost to the first Sunday of August, and commemorates the establishment and propagation of the kingdom of God upon earth in the hearts of the faithful, as well as in His Church.

(2) The second period extends from the first Sunday of August to the last Sunday of October, and commemorates the interior confirmation of this kingdom of God, and its activity in distributing graces and blessings.

(3) The third period, finally, includes the time from the last Sunday of October until Advent; it places before us the accomplished work of this kingdom of God.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

1. The Feast of Holy Trinity is not of ancient origin; it was celebrated in France in the tenth century, but it is only since the beginning of the fourteenth century that its celebration became universal. This feast commemorates the mysteries of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost collectively; it shows us, as it were, at a glance, the infinite love of the three Divine Persons for mankind, in order to excite an ardent reciprocal love in man.

2. This feast divides the entire Ecclesiastical Year into two parts. The first part celebrates the work of the Redemption, the second the fruits of the Redemption. The first part shows us the foundation of the kingdom of God upon earth, the second part shows the continuation of the work of Redemption in the Church. The Feast of Trinity Sunday may be called the keystone of the first part and the cornerstone of the second part of the year.

3. We should, on this day, reflect especially on the fundamental mysteries of our holy religion; namely, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, in Whose name we are baptized, and receive all the other Sacraments. We should thank the three Divine Persons particularly for the greatest blessings bestowed upon us; namely, the Creation, Redemption, and Sanctification, and at the same time ardently implore the divine assistance, that we may be found worthy to obtain these benefits and by them our eternal salvation.

4. Although this feast is of such great significance, still it is celebrated as a feast of the second class, because this mystery is kept before our eyes the whole year through; we acknowledge our faith in it daily, every time we make the sign of the Cross, or say the Gloria Patri.

CORPUS CHRISTI.

1. The words Corpus Christi, in Latin, mean the Body of Christ; for in this feast we celebrate the goodness of God in leaving us His Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament to be our food and drink.

2. From the time of the Apostles the memory of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament was always celebrated on Holy Thursday. But the Church is occupied on that day in meditation upon the Passion of Christ, and in mourning, therefore a proper

celebration of this mystery at that time is not possible. God, Who generally makes use of some weak instrument to accomplish His designs, revealed to a poor nun in Liege, Blessed Juliana, that a special feast should be set apart in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. In consequence of this, the Feast of Corpus Christi was introduced into the diocese of Liege in the year 1246, and Pope Urban the IV. in 1264 extended this feast to the entire Church, and commanded it to be celebrated on the first Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

3. While the Church on Holy Thursday celebrates only a simple commemoration of the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, on Corpus Christi the Blessed Sacrament is especially glorified as the center of the Church's worship and solemnities. Therefore the time for the celebration of this feast is very appropriately chosen. Pentecost is the birthday of the Church; the Feast of the Holy Trinity shows us the three Divine Persons Who coöperate in protecting the Church, and in sustaining it to the end of time. The Feast of Corpus Christi is the fountain source of the Church. It is the Ark of the Covenant of the New Testament, in which God Himself dwells. It is the heart of the Church, from which life flows every moment into all its living members.

4. Corpus Christi is characterized by the procession held on this day. In this procession the Sacred Host is carried in a monstrance beneath a

canopy; flowers are strewn on the way and censers swung; four altars of repose are beautifully decorated with lights and flowers in honor of the Blessed Sacrament; at each of these altars, signifying the four quarters of the world, Benediction is given. This solemn ceremony is generally terminated by the Te Deum in the Church.

5. The Corpus Christi procession is full of significance:

(1) The Church professes thereby publicly and solemnly her belief in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; she announces this with a holy joy to the whole world, and all the faithful participate in this public avowal and joyous exaltation of the Church.

(2) The Church celebrates a triumphant procession; she carries her Divine Spouse in triumph to show to the world, that she is the true Church which Christ founded and promised to remain with, unto the end of time.

(3) This procession is a public act of gratitude for the innumerable graces which flow from the Blessed Sacrament upon the entire Church, as well as upon the faithful individually. It is also an act of public atonement for the blasphemies and profanities offered our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament by the ingratitude of man. Every Christian should participate in this act of gratitude and atonement.

(4) Finally, it is a symbol of the love of the Good Shepherd. He leaves His dwelling place—the tabernacle—to seek His lost sheep. He goes from house to house, from soul to soul, knocks and invites all to His feast.

6. The Feast of Corpus Christi is celebrated with a solemn octave; during this octave the Blessed Sacrament is daily exposed in the Mass; in some churches, evening service is also held with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

OTHER FEASTS OF OUR LORD.

1. The Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, on account of its relative significance to the Feast of Corpus Christi, is celebrated on the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi. This feast had its origin in the middle of the seventeenth century, in consequence of a revelation of our Divine Lord to Margaret Mary Alacoque of the Order of the Visitation (beatified in 1864 by Pope Pius the IX., and canonized by Pope Leo XIII). After repeated investigation and after long wearisome conflict this feast was finally instituted by Pope Clement XIII. The object of this feast is to bring more and more into recognition the love of Jesus for mankind by His passion and by the institution of the Blessed Sacrament; it is also an atonement for the insults offered Him in this sacrament of love. In the beginning of the last century a society having the same object was established in Rome; this society has been enriched

by the Popes with many privileges and indulgences, and has spread all over Catholic countries. The devotion to the Sacred Heart has become so general, that few parishes can be found in which a statue or picture of the Sacred Heart is not exposed for public veneration.

2. The Feast of the Precious Blood. This feast by command of Pope Pius IX. in the year 1849 is celebrated on the first Sunday of July. The object of this feast is to awaken greater love for our Divine Redeemer, who shed His blood out of love for us. In this age of unbelief and religious indifference this feast certainly cannot be considered superfluous. Although a feast of Lent, it is placed in the third festal cycle, because this cycle portrays the active life of the Church, and reminds us thereby that the blood of the Redeemer has given life to the Church, and still continues to give it growth and nourishment.

3. The Feast of the Transfiguration on the sixth of August, which originated in the seventh century, reminds us of the future of the Church, as well as of Christians individually; namely, their glorification.

4. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14, has been celebrated since the solemn erection of the Holy Cross in the new church built by Bishop Macarius on Mount Calvary in the year 335. Since the time of the Emperor Heraclius,

in 631, who miraculously recovered and restored to this church the Cross stolen by the Persians, this feast has been celebrated with still greater solemnity. To exalt the Cross over the whole world, and in the hearts of mankind, is the mission of the Church.

5. The anniversaries of the three patriarchal churches of Rome are also celebrated throughout the Catholic world; namely, August 5 the Church of Our Lady of Snow, also called Maria Major; the Church of the Savior or St. John Lateran, November 9, St. Peter's Church, November 18. The Pope being the supreme bishop, the head of all the faithful; therefore the anniversary of the dedication of his three principal churches in Rome is celebrated, the same as the anniversary of the dedication of each cathedral is celebrated throughout its respective diocese.

FEASTS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

In this festal cycle the following feasts of the Blessed Virgin occur:

1. The Feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, May 24. It was instituted by Pope Pius VII. (†1823) as a feast of thanksgiving for the miraculous help, which Mary had so often obtained for the Church in time of affliction and distress. It is at the same time a feast of supplication, whereby we implore Mary, the help of Christians, to always obtain victory for the Church and for her children in all their combats

2. The Feast of the Visitation, July 2d, was instituted at the close of the fourteenth century, that, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the schism then prevailing might cease, and peace be restored to the Church. Pius IX. raised it to a feast of the second class, to thank Mary for his return to Rome, from whence he had been driven by the Revolution. According to its origin, this feast is a feast of peace, on which we should implore Mary to obtain by her intercession peace for the Church as well as for her faithful children. According to the mystery celebrated on this day, it serves as a preparation for the approaching Ecclesiastical Year.

3. The Feast of Mount Carmel (Our Lady of the Scapular), on the 16th of July. The Mother of God appeared to blessed Simon Stock, General of the Carmelite Order at Cambridge, England, and gave him a scapular, with the promise that everyone who wore it and lived piously should escape eternal death, should experience her protection in times of danger, and should be speedily released from Purgatory. A second promise, said to have been made by our Blessed Lady to Pope John XXII., is, that those who have devoutly worn her scapular, and die in the grace of God, shall be released from Purgatory on the Saturday after their death, by our Blessed Lady herself. Blessed Simon Stock in 1250 founded the Confraternity of the Holy Scapular. For over three hundred years the Church has celebrated a special feast in honor of our Lady of the Scapular.

This scapular consists of two pieces of brown woolen cloth fastened together by braid so that one piece hangs on the breast, the other on the back; this must be worn night and day. There are four other scapulars used in the Church; that of the Trinity, of white material with a red and blue cross, given by the Trinitarians or priests delegated by them; the Servite Scapular of the Seven Dolors, of black woolen stuff; that of the Immaculate Conception, of light blue woolen cloth, propagated by Ursula Benincasa in the sixteenth century, given by the Theatines, who governed the Congregation to which this nun belonged; the red scapular of the Passion, originated by a Sister of Charity at Paris, who is said to have received a revelation on the matter in 1846; it is given by the Vincentian Fathers. All of these Confraternities are designed to promote prayer, and other good works in their members.

Any one may be enrolled in these Confraternities either by a priest of the respective Orders or by any other priest duly authorized. In this country it is customary for the bishops to give all their priests the faculty of investing with the brown scapular of Mount Carmel. Whatever formulas were heretofore permitted for investing with the scapular must now give way to the one prescribed by Pope Leo XIII., July 24, 1888.

Whoever is invested with one or more of these scapulars, participates in all the merits of the Order to which the scapular belongs, and partakes of all the indulgences with which the respective scapular is endowed.

4. On the 2d of August occurs the Feast of Portiuncula—Church of St. Mary's of the Angels, at Assisi, one of the three churches which were repaired by St. Francis. It takes its name from a neighboring village, called Portiuncula. According to a common tradition Jesus Christ appeared to St. Francis in 1221, and bade him go to the Pope, who would give a plenary indulgence to all sincere penitents who should devoutly visit that Church. Two years later Pope Honorius III., at the request of St. Francis, granted this indulgence, known in Italy, as the Pardon of Assisi, confining it to the 2d of August, and to the Church of the Portiuncula. Gregory the XV., 1622, extended it to all the churches of the observant Franciscans, including the Recollects or Reformed, between the first Vespers and sunset of August 2d. In favor of these same churches, Innocent XI. in 1678 granted the application of this indulgence to the souls in Purgatory. Finally the indulgence of the Portiuncula can be gained in all churches in which the Third Order of St. Francis is canonically established, and it has been extended even to parish churches in countries where there are no Franciscan convents. A peculiarity of this indulgence is, that, after receiving the Sacraments, it can be gained as often as one visits the church and prays according to the intention of the Church.

5. The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15. It is called Assumption because it is the belief of the Church that the Blessed Virgin did not, like her Divine Son, by her own

power, ascend into heaven, but by a special grace of God was assumed, body and soul, into heaven. Although it has never been declared an article of faith (dogma), still this has been, at all times, the universal belief of the Saints, Fathers and of all the writers of the Church.

This feast is one of the oldest in the Ecclesiastical Year. At first it was celebrated in several churches on the 18th of January, but since the sixth century it has been celebrated throughout the Church on the 15th of August. It has always been regarded as the crowning feast of the Mother of God, wherefore in many countries this day is called "Great Lady Day." It is the only feast of the Blessed Virgin which has been celebrated from the earliest times, as a feast of the first class with vigil and fast.

After the ascension of her Divine Son, Mary remained a longer time upon the earth, consoling and assisting the Apostles in propagating the faith. But after the Church had taken firm root and had begun to be spread over all countries of the earth, Mary was taken up into heaven to be crowned Queen of Heaven and Earth. Since then she has remained Protectress of the Church and the Help of Christians. On this day Mary is hailed as the Queen of Heaven and Earth; raised above all the Angels and Saints, whence by her intercession she diffuses graces and blessings upon all mankind.

6. Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, September 8. This feast originated in the Eastern Church, in the middle of the fifth century after the Council of Ephesus in 431. Later it was also admitted into the Western Church, and it is only since the beginning of the eleventh century that it has been universally celebrated.

The Church does not celebrate the nativity of any saint, excepting that of the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist. All the other saints were born in original sin, and therefore separated from God, consequently the Church has no reason to celebrate these days as days of joy. On the contrary she celebrates the day of their death, as the birthday of eternal life.

7. The Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, on the Sunday following the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. This feast was, at first, celebrated only in Spain, but when John Sobieski, the Polish king, after invoking the intercession of Mary, routed the Turkish forces with only a handful of troops and raised the siege of Vienna in 1683, Pope Innocent XI., in gratitude for this signal victory, extended this feast to the whole Church.

Although the name of Mary was not celebrated by a special feast, still this name had always been held in great veneration. Even the early Fathers of the Church endeavored to explain the significance of this name. Bitterness, Star of the Sea, Powerful Lady, are the common interpretations of the mean-

ing. Formerly it was not permitted to give a girl the name of Mary, out of respect to the Blessed Virgin. In the Church of God upon earth, the name of Mary is praised by all nations, as the Blessed Virgin herself prophesies in her canticle, "Magnificat." The fulfillment of this prophecy is announced by the Feast of the Name of Mary. In all dangers and temptations, we should call with confidence on the name of Mary, and we shall experience how powerful that name is.

8. The Feast of the Seven Dolors is again celebrated on the third Sunday in September, to show us that Mary through her innate participation in the sufferings of Jesus, became the mother of mankind, and patroness of the Church. The Mother of Sorrows admonishes us on this feast to bear our sufferings with patience and resignation, and thereby obtain the everlasting joys of heaven.

9. The Feast of the Holy Rosary, on the first Sunday in October. On the 7th of October, 1571, the Christians under Don John of Austria obtained a glorious victory over the Turks at Lepanto; this event occurred on the same day that the Confraternity of the Rosary was holding a solemn procession in Rome, and offering special devotions to obtain a victory over the Infidel. In gratitude for this extraordinary victory, which was attributed to Mary's intercession, Pope Pius V. instituted this feast, which after repeated victories over the Turks, in the beginning of the last century, 1716, was permanently established on the first Sunday in October.

The recitation of the rosary is for the laity what the Breviary is for the clergy. As the Breviary is composed of the 150 psalms of David, so the Rosary contains 150 Hail Marys. Therefore the entire Rosary is often called the Psalter of Mary. We never tire of repeating words that come from the depths of the heart. Our Lord in His agony did this in the Garden of Gethsemane on Mount Olivet. David in his psalm, CXXXV., exclaims no less than twenty-seven times: "His mercy endureth forever"; and St. Francis of Assisi spent whole nights repeating the words: "My God and my All." The devout servants of Mary used to address her frequently in the words of the Archangel, adding one Hail Mary after another as one places roses in a wreath.

The hermits of the first century who could not read the psalter were wont to recite one Our Father and one Hail Mary instead of every psalm, and in order to note the number they had said made use of small pebbles, or a row of little balls strung on a cord. The Hail Mary presents to us the Incarnation of Christ, whence all the mysteries of our redemption proceed.

The Rosary is divided into fifteen decades, the mysteries being arranged in three sets of five each, corresponding to the three great divisions of our Lord's life; His infancy and youth; His Passion and death; and His Resurrection and glory.

We begin the Rosary with the Creed and three Hail Marys, for the increase within us of the three theological virtues. While reciting the Rosary

every one should touch the beads as he says the prayers; but if several persons join in saying it, it is only necessary for one to hold the rosary to regulate the number of prayers. This form of prayer must be most pleasing to the Blessed Virgin, for when she appeared to Bernedette at Lourdes, she held a rosary in her hand (1858). Pope Pius IX. says: "I specially recommend the devotion of the Rosary for it was taught us by the Mother of God herself, and it is far more pleasing to her than any other (1877)."

The Rosary in its present form owes its origin to St. Dominic; although the idea was not original with him, still he was the first to make the custom general of substituting one hundred and fifty Hail Marys for the one hundred and fifty psalms. When about the year 1200 the heresies of the Albigenses wrought great mischief in Southern France and Northern Italy, St. Dominic was commissioned by the Pope to preach in refutation of their erroneous tenets. As his efforts availed but little, he then had recourse to the Mother of God; she appeared to him and said: *"Preach the Rosary, which is a shield against the shafts of the enemy, the rampart of the Church of God, and the Book of Life. . . . Exhort everyone to be devout to the Rosary, and thou shalt produce wonderful fruit in souls." Bravely he introduced it everywhere and before long, it had effected the conversion of more than a hundred thousand heretics.

*Lambing: "The Sacramentals."

The Rosary has been richly indulgenced by the Holy See, and its recital has been strongly urged upon the faithful. Leo XIII. has granted an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines each time one assists at the recitation of the Rosary, commanded to be said during the month of October. Pope Pius IX. bequeathed as a legacy to the faithful this admonition: "Let the Rosary, this simple, beautiful method of prayer, enriched with many indulgences, be habitually recited of an evening in every household. These are my last words to you: the memorial I leave behind me." Again he said: "In the whole of the Vatican there is no greater treasure than the Rosary."*

There are three forms of blessing by which indulgences are attached to beads: The Dominican, the Bridgetine, and the Papal or Apostolic. It is natural to expect that the Dominicans should have special privileges in the matter of blessing rosaries, and so it is, according to the decrees of several Sovereign Pontiffs.

So numerous are the indulgences attached to the recitation of the Rosary that no attempt will be made to state them here; the reader is recommended to simply form an intention, while reciting the beads, to gain all the indulgences within his reach.

As to the Bridgetine Rosary, this chaplet is so called because it was introduced by St. Bridget of Sweden, who died at Rome in the year 1373. She conceived the idea of commemorating by a set form

of prayer the sixty-three years that our Blessed Mother is said to have lived on earth. In her chaplet she made six divisions, each division comprising ten Hail Marys, preceded by the Our Father, and followed by the Apostles' Creed. The whole prayer was concluded by one Our Father and three Hail Marys. Thus the Hail Mary is said sixty-three times. The Bridgetine chaplet should have six decades. To gain the indulgences of the chaplet of St. Bridget it is not necessary to meditate on the mysteries of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin. No formula is required for blessing the beads, it is sufficient that the priest merely makes the sign of the Cross over them without saying a word, and without sprinkling them with Holy Water. Although priests in general have faculties for blessing Bridgetine chaplets, few persons really obtain the indulgence. To obtain all the indulgences with which the Bridgetine chaplet is endowed, it is necessary to have a chaplet of six decades and to terminate each decade with the Apostles' Creed. But if the rosary of five, ten or fifteen decades has been blessed by a Dominican, or by a priest having faculties to give the Dominican blessing, not only the Rosary indulgences, but also all the indulgences conceded to the chaplet of St. Bridget may be gained by virtue of the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, April 13, 1726, approved by Benedict XIII. This privilege is not true of other beads or chaplets.*

*See Lambing and Spirago.

10. The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, November 21, has been celebrated in the Western Church only since the fourteenth century (1374), but in the Eastern Church at a much earlier period. It is an ancient tradition that the Blessed Virgin was, when about three years old, solemnly offered to God in the temple.

By this feast we are admonished to imitate the example of the Blessed Virgin, and dedicate our lives to the service of God; also to implore her intercession, especially at the hour of death.

11. Besides the above mentioned feasts of the Blessed Virgin, there are several others of minor importance celebrated in this season: viz., the Feast of St. Mary ad Nives (of the Snow), August 5; Our Lady of Mercy, for the Ransom of Captives; September 24; Feast of the Maternity of the Blessed Virgin on the second Sunday in October; Purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the third Sunday in October; the Patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, second Sunday in November.

Mary is truly the Help of Christians, the principal protectress of the Church of God upon earth. Through her intercession Christianity is spread more and more, and protected against its enemies; therefore we celebrate so many feasts of the Blessed Virgin in this last festal cycle.

FEASTS OF THE ANGELS AND SAINTS.

1. The Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, June 24, belongs to the oldest feasts of the Church. The nativity of this Saint is celebrated because at his birth he was free from original sin, and by the miracles that occurred at his birth he announced the coming Redeemer.

On account of its significance this feast might, very appropriately, be placed at the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year; nevertheless, it is more fittingly placed at the beginning of the third festal cycle. St. John the Baptist, the Precursor of our Lord, preached penance to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah, and so should he now move our hearts to contrition and penance, that we may, as living members of our Holy Church, serve the Redeemer. In ancient times this feast was preceded by a forty days' fast; this was later mitigated to three weeks, and finally abolished altogether.

The Nativity of St. John the Baptist is celebrated at a time when the days begin to shorten; on the contrary the birth of our Lord is celebrated when the days begin to lengthen. According to St. Augustine the meaning of this is, as St. John himself says "He must increase, while I must decrease."

2. The Feast of SS. Peter and Paul has been celebrated since the earliest times on the 29th of June. According to the general tradition, this day is the anniversary of the death of these Apostles. This feast is very solemnly celebrated, because it belongs

to the two greatest Apostles, who distinguished themselves the most by their zeal; it is specially celebrated as the foundation of the Catholic Hierarchy, being also a celebration of the Papal Primacy at Rome. Peter appointed by Christ, Head of the Church and keeper of the keys suffered martyrdom at Rome, and bequeathed the primacy of the holy Church to his successor. The Mass and Office of this day refer particularly to Peter as the Prince of the Apostles, the Head of the Church; on the following day, however, the Feast of St. Paul is celebrated. These two Apostles are so intimately united, that a feast of the one is never celebrated without a commemoration of the other. As these Apostles were attached to each other in life, always animated with the same zeal, and unwearied in their labors for the propagation of the Gospel, and the Church of Christ, so they suffered martyrdom on the same day at Rome, and since then their memory is celebrated on the same day. Although only Peter was chosen by Christ to be the Head of the Church, still St. Paul is called, like him, Prince of the Apostles. Paul, who was often called the Apostle of the Gentiles, contributed most to the spread of Christianity, especially among the Heathen nations. If we consider St. Peter the cornerstone of the Church, we must admit that St. Paul was the chief laborer in its construction. Therefore we justly honor them as the chief mainstays of the Church—as the Princes of the Apostles. This feast occurs most appropriately in the fore part of the third

festal cycle, because it presents to us the foundation of the Church and its development. It is very solemnly celebrated in Rome, and on this day the Holy Father bestows his blessing upon the whole Christian world. We, also, on this day should remember with joy that we are children of the Apostolic Church, and renew our resolution of openly professing our faith at all times.

3. In this festal cycle, some other feasts of the Apostles are celebrated, viz.:

(1) The Feast of St. James the Greater, on the 25th of July. It is the day of the translation of his relics, but not the day of his death; he suffered martyrdom about Easter.

(2) The Feast of St. Peter's Chains on the first of August; it is of very ancient origin, and is celebrated in commemoration of the chains which Peter wore at Jerusalem, and later at Rome; they are still preserved.

(3) The Feast of St. Bartholomew, August 24.

(4) The Feast of St. Matthew, September 21.

(5) The Feast of the Apostles, SS. Simon and Jude, October 28.

These feasts of the Apostles originated in the first Christian centuries, and remind us of the burning zeal with which the Apostles labored in the establishment and propagation of the Church, and shed their blood for Christ.

4. The Feast of the Archangel Michael, September 29, occurs very appropriately in this season, for St. Michael is the guardian of the whole Church. This feast probably originated in the fourth century, in the time of Constantine the Great, who built a church at Byzantium, in honor of St. Michael. At first this feast was not in commemoration of St. Michael alone, but of the Angels in general. It was only in the beginning of the sixteenth century, that the faithful began to celebrate a special Feast of the Guardian Angels; in 1670, the 2d of October was set apart for its celebration. In Eastern lands it is celebrated on the first Sunday of September. How beautiful is this feast of the Holy Angels! How vividly it reminds the faithful of the powerful protection of the Heavenly Spirits, under whose watchful guidance we are shielded from numberless dangers of soul and body from childhood to the grave. The faithful Christian, therefore, will show his gratitude to the Holy Angels, by recommending himself anew to their further protection and thus strengthen his faith in their invisible presence.

5. The Feast of All Saints, on the 1st of November, was celebrated as early as the fourth century by the Greeks, who kept a feast of all the martyrs and saints, on the first Sunday after Pentecost; and we still possess a sermon delivered on that day by St. Chrysostom. In the West, this feast was introduced by Pope Boniface IV. after he had dedicated, as the Church of the Blessed Virgin and the Martyrs, the Pantheon, which had been made over to

him by the Emperor Phocas. The feast of this dedication was kept on the thirteenth of May. About 731 Gregory III. consecrated a chapel in St. Peter's church in honor of all the saints, from which time All Saints' Day has been kept in Rome, as now, on the first of November. From about the middle of the ninth century the feast came into general observance throughout the West. It ranks as a double of the first class, with an octave.

That none of the elect might be omitted in the honor and veneration due them, this feast was established. During the course of the year the Church offers for our contemplation the feast of one saint after another, but on this day she shows us the heavens opened and the countless multitude of the Elect from all nations, races and states of life. The Church celebrates her harvest feast on this day, showing herself the true Church that leads her children to eternal bliss. The true Christian, especially should feel on this day that he also is created for heaven. The sight of so many saints that were once human, like himself, enlivens the hope within him of reaching his eternal goal. Renewed courage and strength invigorates his heart. Penetrated with a lively faith in the Communion of Saints, he confidently calls upon the inhabitants of heaven for their powerful assistance.

By far the greater number of the Elect who have attained to the beatific vision are unknown to us. The Church honors only those as saints who either

have suffered martyrdom, or whose sanctity has been indisputably confirmed. In former times bishops could declare a deceased person worthy of veneration, but now this right is reserved exclusively for the Pope. For this purpose the Church has established an exceedingly strict and deliberate process, which usually develops into three degrees,—that of Venerable, Blessed, and Saint. The first step of the process is a formal inquiry as to whether the deceased practiced the virtues in an heroic degree. If this is attested in the affirmative, then the deceased is declared venerable. The second degree is that of beatification. The person who is to be beatified must have practiced, in the heroic degree, chiefly, the three theological virtues,—Faith, Hope and Charity, and the four cardinal virtues,—Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance, with all that these suppose and involve. It must also be proved that four or at least two miracles have been wrought by the intercession of the person whose virtues are under debate; upon which the Pope declares him or her Blessed (Beatus), by virtue of which a limited public veneration is permitted. Canonization is the third and final degree in the recognition and estimation of the virtues of a servant of God, preparatory to his or her being elevated to the altars, and commended to the perpetual veneration and invocation of Christians throughout the Catholic Church. Before proceeding to canonization it must be proved that at least two miracles have been wrought through the intercession of the blessed person since the beatification. This

proof is attended with the same formalities and surrounded by the same rigorous conditions as in the case of the miracles proved before beatification, whereupon the Pope declares, that the servant of God in question shall be inscribed on the register of the Saints. Though Rome from century to century, has established many miracles with the greatest judicial rigor and exactitude still the unbelieving world persist in denying, without further examination, the truth of these mircales; even going so far as to dispute their possibility. For the thoughtful Christian, these authenticated miracles are an indisputable proof that the Catholic Church is the sanctifying Church of Christ. This proof is confirmed anew at every process of beatification or canonization.

6. The commemoration of All Souls is celebrated on the day after All Saints, November 2d, in order to show the intimate union of the Church Triumphant with the Church Suffering and the Church Militant. We find traces of this feast even in the eighth century. Abbot Odilo (998) introduced it into all the monasteries of his Congregation and from this time on, it gradually spread to all the Christian world.

In some parishes it is customary to have an octave of prayers, or of Masses, for the Poor Souls. The Church knowing their suffering condition, never relaxes her motherly care, but, from the earliest times commanded a special memento for the dead to be made daily after the Elevation. In the Breviary they are always remem-

bered. Besides all these commemorations, the Church like a tender mother has instituted this special feast, to summon all Christians to pray and offer sacrifice for her suffering children in Purgatory; she has also established highly indulgenced Confraternities for this same purpose.

This tender, maternal love of the Church should awaken sympathy for the Poor Souls in every heart. The true Christian will not forget the souls of his parents, relatives and benefactors, but bear in mind that he will, one day, find mercy in Purgatory in the same degree as he has practiced it upon earth.

It is a beautiful custom for children to decorate the graves of their parents with flowers, but it is more gratifying to them when they ornament the graves of the departed with prayers, and tears of penance.

FEAST OF THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH.

1. Dedication means, properly speaking, the act by which a church is solemnly set apart for the worship of God; afterwards this event is commemorated by a feast of dedication. As the Jews in the Old Law dedicated the tabernacle and temple with solemn rites, so Christians have, since Apostolic times, solemnly dedicated their churches to Almighty God. From the time of Constantine the Great, when the Christians were allowed the free exercise of their religion, not only the dedication of a church was sol-

emnly celebrated, but also the anniversary of the dedication. The feast of the dedication is looked upon as the birthday of that church, and is therefore very solemnly celebrated.

The solemn consecration of a church is reserved to the bishop of the diocese, or to another bishop appointed by him. The present law of the Church forbids the use of a church for the celebration of Mass, unless it has been at least blessed. This blessing is a less solemn rite, and may be performed by a priest deputed by a bishop. Only those churches that have been solemnly consecrated by a bishop can have a feast of dedication commemorated in the Breviary and in the Mass.

2. The Feast of Dedication is kept in consecrated churches on the anniversary of the consecration as a double of the first class with an octave. The bishop may for grave reasons fix a day other than the actual anniversary on which the feast of dedication is to be kept, but after the consecration no change in the day can be made without leave from the Pope. The feast of the dedication of the Cathedral is also kept throughout the diocese as a double of the first class, but without an octave.

The bishop dedicates the church, and the celebration of the anniversary should remind the faithful that they are members of this church, and united with their bishop form one Christian community.

When celebrating a dedication feast, the Christian should thank God for the priceless gift of faith, and resolve to make use of the graces and blessings which flow from this inestimable treasure. It is to

be deplored that in many places the spiritual significance of the dedication feast has degenerated into a feast of worldly enjoyment, oftentimes leading to excess.

TITULAR FEAST.

1. In early Christian times it was customary to erect churches or altars over the graves of martyrs in which to venerate their relics. From this arose the custom of venerating that Saint whose relics were preserved in the Church; the name of that Saint was given to the church at its dedication. When a church is dedicated to some mystery of our holy religion, either from the life of our Lord or the Blessed Virgin, viz.: The Incarnation, Assumption, etc., the name given to it is its title, and the feast set apart for its celebration is called its Titular Feast. When, however, the church is dedicated to some Saint or Angel, that Saint or Angel becomes its patron Saint, and the feast is called its Patron Feast (patrocinium).

2. The patronal or titular feast of a Church is always solemnly celebrated, either on the day itself, or on the following Sunday; so, also, the patronal feast of a country or diocese.

The patronal feast of the United States is the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Under this beautiful title, the Blessed Virgin was chosen not merely as Patroness of the Church in the United States, but as Patroness of the United States.

PART SECOND.

SACRED MYSTERIES.

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS AND THE SACRAMENTS.

SACRED CEREMONIES.

1. By sacred ceremonies we understand those external acts, instituted by the Church, which indicate an interior effect of divine grace; or the truths of the Church symbolically represented for our contemplation. They are, therefore, specially qualified to enliven and nourish our faith, and many of them are means of imparting graces.

2. Such ceremonies are even essential, because it is natural for man, who is composed of body and soul, to express his interior devotion by exterior acts. Man is impressed by a teaching which is conveyed symbolically, and which appeals to the eye as well as to the ear; and as body and soul both come from God, we are bound to use both in His service. Man even represents God and His Angels, under figures of the human form. If religion had no exterior signs it would be inapprehensible to man, who involuntarily gives outward expression to the inner

activity of his soul. The bearing and actions of a man give indication of what is going on in his soul. In fact, history bears witness that no nation ever existed possessing a religion that did not have exterior ceremonies.

3. In the Old Testament there were many such ceremonies commanded by God; but as the Old Law was only preparatory for the New, so the ceremonies of the Old Testament fulfilled their mission with the coming of Christ. In the New Law, Christ Himself made use of exterior signs with His sacraments, and often otherwise in imparting graces. This has also been the uninterrupted practice of the Church since the time of the Apostles.

4. Some of the outward signs used by the Church were instituted by Christ, and these when validly administered, infallibly impart the graces connected with them; these are the Sacraments. There are other signs prescribed by the Church which are called Sacramentals. The Sacramentals impart graces similar to the Sacraments, not of themselves, however, nor infallibly like the Sacraments, but by the prayers of the Church, and the faith of those who make use of them. There are other outward signs again purely ceremonial; these are not used independently, but serve only to enhance the solemnity of Divine Service, and to make the hearts of the faithful more accessible to grace.

5. In order to participate in the graces derived from these ceremonies, the faithful should endeavor to become familiar with them, at least with the most

important. They should often reflect upon their significance, and they will soon perceive what a rich incentive to piety lies concealed in these ceremonies.

The most important ceremonies of the Church are the ceremonies of the Mass and the Sacraments.

6. An epitome of these ceremonies which together form one whole is termed, Ritual. The combined rules of a religion is its cultus; viz., the cultus of the Jewish or the Catholic religion.

SACRED VESTMENTS.

1. By sacred vestments we understand the distinctive dress worn by the priest in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or in administering the Sacraments. Even in the Old Law the priestly vestments were minutely described.

In the New Law the Divine Service had become a much holier sacrifice, and it would seem more inappropriate to perform this Divine Service in secular dress. Even in the time of the Apostles, special garments blessed for the purpose were worn. At first the form of these was similar to the secular dress; this, however, changed with the course of time, but the sacred vestments retained much of their primitive form.

2. At Divine Service the priest appears not simply as man, but as the representative of Christ; therefore, it is proper for him to appear in a distinctive dress, which will announce him as the

messenger of God, and the mediator between heaven and earth. This dress indicates, on the one hand, the dignity and office of the priest, on the other, the disposition which he should have in performing his sacerdotal functions.

3. The sacred vestments worn by the priest in celebrating the Holy Sacrifice are six in number, viz.: the amice, alb, cincture, maniple, stole, and chasuble. Of these the alb, the cincture, the stole and the chasuble date from the time of the Apostles; the others are of later origin.

4. The amice, a white linen cloth, served in early times as a covering for the head and neck; it continued to be so used until about the tenth century, when its place was supplied by the ecclesiastical cap, or berreta, then introduced. The Capuchins and Dominicans still wear the amice over the head until the beginning of Mass, when it is thrown back on the shoulders and adjusted around the neck. As the amice is the first to be donned in vesting, it might be called the basis of the other vestments, and is therefore symbolic of faith, the basis of our holy religion. This cloth is placed on the shoulders and around the neck, and fastened over the breast, to remind us that our faith must be strong and active; it should sanctify our speech and penetrate our inmost soul.

5. The alb is a symbol of the purity of soul and body requisite for Divine Service. The amice and alb must be of linen. As linen obtains its whiteness

only after much arduous labor, so it should remind us that purity of heart is obtained and retained only by patient toil and mortification.

6. The cincture or girdle, also of linen, is of as great antiquity as the alb, which it always accompanies; it should be of such length, that when doubled it may encircle the body of the priest. Formerly it was made like a sash, now usually a cord; it is the symbol of continence and self restraint. The two ends which hang down equally on each side, are symbolic of the command to watch and pray, the only means by which we acquire self restraint.

7. The maniple was at first a linen cloth worn on the left arm, representing the cloth which Veronica gave our Lord to wipe His face. Since the eighth century it has been made of the same material as the chasuble and stole.

8. The stole was at first a long white gown, a symbol of sanctifying grace, which our first parents lost through sin in paradise, and which was repurchased by the Passion of Christ. It is the eminent office of every priest to administer and increase this sanctifying grace through the Sacraments; therefore the stole is a distinctive mark of the sacerdotal office, and must be worn by the priest whenever he performs a priestly function. Formerly, priests were obliged to wear the stole, even when not in church, as a mark of their dignity. According to the present discipline, only the Pope wears the stole in common daily life, and this is in evidence of his

jurisdiction over the Universal Church. The papal stole is ornamented with three crosses, the keys, and the tiara. Among the vestments the stole is the symbol of immortality and obedience.

9. The chasuble, which the priest wears outside the other vestments, denotes charity. Charity is the "wedding garment," without which no one will be admitted to the heavenly marriage feast, and without which no priest should ascend the altar. The chasuble is the royal mantle of the priest; it shows the love of sacrifice, which should encompass him, as the chasuble envelopes the body.

Formerly the chasuble was much larger than now; it reached down to the feet and covered the whole body, even the arms and the hands. Therefore the acolytes were obliged to lift the chasuble at the Elevation, to permit the priest to make the genuflection.

The various portions of the sacerdotal vestments are also commemorative of our Lords' Passion, and serve to remind the priest of the duties of his office.

1. The amice is the veil which covered the face of our Lord.

2. The alb, the vesture He was clothed in by Herod.

3. The cincture, the scourge ordered by Pilate.

4. The maniple, the rope by which He was led.

5. The stole, the rope which fastened Him to the pillar.

6. The chasuble, the purple garment worn before Pilate.

Behold the priest at the altar, the tonsure recalls the crown of thorns. Nothing is wanting, not even the cross; it is large upon the chasuble; the celebrant, like his Master, carries it upon his shoulders.

This cross is formed of our iniquities. Let us not forget it, when the priest comes forth to offer sacrifice; let us say to him who stands in the place of Jesus Christ: It behooves me to carry that cross which love has made you bear in my stead. I know that my weakness is too great for such a burden; but, at least, I will fill the place of Simon of Cyrene, and will help you with the aid of my feeble prayers. How very few Christians pray for the priest as he goes to the altar, yet not only charity but justice renders this a duty.

10. The cope, which is called pluviale in the Latin liturgical language, from the Latin word pluvial—rain,—was formerly worn in processions as a protection against rain; it was provided with a hood, with which the head could be covered; the cape on the cope is a remnant of this. Strictly speaking, it is only another form of the chasuble, better adapted to processions and other religious functions, distinct from the Mass.

11. The super humeral veil, or vellum, is made of the same material as the cope, and is used by the subdeacon in solemn Masses, to hold the paten from

the Offertory to the Pater Noster, in imitation of the Levites of the Old Law, who were not permitted to carry the sacred vessels until they had been wrapped up in coverings by the priests. It is also worn by the priest while giving benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, and while carrying the Blessed Sacrament in processions.

12. The surplice, derived from the Latin word superpellicium; it has wide sleeves, the same significance as the alb, and supplies its place in many sacerdotal functions apart from the Mass.

The rochet, a vestment of linen, fitting closely, with close sleeves reaching to the hands, proper to bishops, abbots and other dignitaries. The length and close fitting sleeves distinguish it from the surplice. Priests who are allowed to wear it are to regard it as a choir garment, and are not to use it in the administration of the Sacraments. Bishops, on the other hand, wear it in giving Confirmation.

13. The dalmatic. A vestment open on each side, with wide sleeves, and marked with two stripes. It is worn by deacons at High Mass, as well as at processions and benediction, and by bishops under the chasuble when they celebrate Mass pontifically.

The word dalmatic is derived from Dalmatia, where it was originally worn; it is of the same color as the chasuble of the celebrant.

14. The vestments worn by the bishop at a pontifical High Mass give evidence of his Apostolic power. The bishop wears, besides the vestments

of the priest, also those of the deacon, because in the bishop are combined the virtues and functions of all the ministers of the altar. But, since the bishop's power with its requisite love of sacrifice is a more perfect one than that of the priest, he wears furthermore six other ornaments. The first three are emblematic of his greater virtue, the last three of his greater power. These ornaments are:

The hose and sandals; the hose are ceremonial stockings reaching to the knee; the shoes are called sandals; they signify the pure intention with which the bishop, as embassador of heaven, fearlessly leads the faithful on the way of salvation.

The pectoral cross. The cross worn on the breast, is emblematic of the sacrificial love with which the bishop courageously walks in the bloody footprints of our Divine Lord. The relics of the saints, enclosed in this cross, should still more increase the love of sacrifice.

Gloves are worn as a sign that the bishop's hands should always be pure and spotless, in order to administer justice and impart blessings to mankind.

The mitre is a symbol of the bishop's high dignity as a legislator and guide to the people of God. The two horns of the mitre denote the two Testaments, because his office of legislator and teacher embraces the revelations of the Old and the New Testaments.

The ring worn by the bishop is to signify his indissoluble union with the Church of God. As spouse of the Church, he is at the same time her defender against her enemies, and administrator of the treasures of grace confided to her by Christ.

The crosier or pastoral staff denotes the pastoral power bestowed upon him, to lead, govern and support the flock entrusted to his care. The bishop's staff is bent at the top like a shepherd's crook. The Pope alone does not use a pastoral staff.

At all Divine Services a lighted candle is kept beside the book to indicate the bishop's higher knowledge, as well as the prudence and watchfulness he should exercise in the administration of his office.

15. The pallium is part of the papal vesture; but the Pope bestows it also on patriarchs and archbishops, to signify that he places part of his supreme jurisdiction upon their shoulders. Special canonical rights are connected with the pallium. It is a band of white wool worn on the shoulders, and is attached to the chasuble by three golden pins. Before being sent to the prelate, it is placed, over night, on the tomb of St. Peter; it is to be worn only on special occasions. Its material, taken from the fleece of little lambs, reminds the bishop that he should carry the weary sheep on his shoulders, and bring them back to the fold, even at the price of the greatest toil and weariness. The three pins which fasten it to the chasuble are a souvenir of the love of the Good Shepherd, fastened by nails to the cross for love of His sheep. The higher the dignity the greater love of sacrifice should accompany it. He who is invested with the pallium should abide in the closest intimacy with the successor of St. Peter, the Pope of Rome, therefore the pallium is sent him from the tomb of St. Peter.

16. The Pope on special, solemn occasions wears the Tiara, or triple crown. At ceremonies of a purely spiritual character, the Pope wears the bishop's mitre, not the tiara. The tiara is a sign of his temporal power, as well as of his ecclesiastical sovereignty. He wears a triple crown to signify that he has received his power from the Triune God; and exercises his office as legislator, priest, and shepherd over the entire church in the name of the Triune God.

17. The color of the vestments changes according to the different seasons and functions of the ecclesiastical year; and is expressive of the disposition with which the Divine Service should be celebrated.

(1) White denotes joy, innocence and purity; it is worn, therefore, on the feasts of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, the Angels, and of all those Saints who are not martyrs. On the Feast of St. John the Baptist, however, white is worn although he was martyred, because he was sanctified before his birth.

(2) Red is an emblem of love and of blood; it is used on Pentecost in memory of the tongues of fire; it is also used on the feasts of the Apostles and martyrs, and on those of our Lord's Passion, as well as on the Feast of the Holy Cross, because our Lord shed His blood upon the Cross.

(3) Green, symbolic of hope, is used after the octave of Epiphany until Septuagesima, and after the octave of Pentecost until Advent, on those days which have no special feast.

(4) Violet, the color of humility and penance, is worn in Advent and Lent, on Ember days, Rogation days and vigils. This color is also used on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, on account of the lamentations and weeping heard through Jerusalem when they were massacred by order of Herod. But should this feast fall upon Sunday, the color of the occasion is red, as is also the color of the octave, from the fact that the lamentations are supposed to have ceased by this time.

(5) Black, symbolic of mourning, is used in Masses and Offices of the Dead, also on Good Friday in memory of the profound darkness that covered the land, when our Lord was crucified.

There is generally some white about black vestments to indicate that the souls of the departed will soon enter upon eternal joys. At the obsequies of young children, white is worn because they die in innocence.

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The Sacrifice of the Mass is the self-same sacrifice which was consummated by Christ for the redemption of mankind. "The order of the Mass," says Pope Innocent III., "is arranged upon a plan so well conceived, that everything done by Jesus

Christ or concerning Him, from His Incarnation to His Ascension, is therein largely contained either in words or in actions, and wonderfully presented."

2. The Mass is divided usually into four parts, viz.: into a preparatory, and three principal parts.

The preparatory part was in early Christian times called the Mass of the Catechumens, because they were allowed to assist at it. This part comprises the "Judica me Deus," (Psalm XLII.), the Introit, the Kyrie, the Gloria, Collects, Epistles and Gospel. The Credo forms the transition to the real Sacrifice of the Mass of the faithful, as it was formerly called.

Part first comprises the Offertory, the Lavabo (washing of hands), the Orate Fratres, the Secret, the Preface and the Sanctus.

Part second comprises the Canon, and begins therefore, after the Sanctus with the prayer, Te igitur, and ends just before the "Pater Noster." The name Canon is given to this part of the Mass, because it contains the fixed rule according to which the Sacrifice of the New Testament is to be offered.

Part third begins with the Pater Noster and continues to the end of Mass; it comprises the Pater Noster, Agnus Dei, Domine non sum dignus, the Communion, Post Communion, the Ite Missa est, the Blessing and the Last Gospel.

3. Various interpretations of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass have been given. Some consider it only a figure of the Passion and Death of our Lord,

because in the Mass, the sacrifice of the Cross is renewed and continued. But the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass contains still more and greater mysteries; it comprises the whole life of our Redeemer, and the entire work of Redemption.

4. Christ effected the work of redemption as Prophet, Priest and King. This threefold activity is also presented to us in the Sacrifice of the Mass. From the Introit to the Offertory, we see the prophetic activity of our Redeemer; from the Offertory to the Pater Noster, His sacerdotal activity, and from the Pater Noster to the end of Mass, His kingly activity. Therefore, according to its essence, the Mass may be divided into three parts.

5. In order to participate in the sacrifice of our Redeemer, we must offer ourselves with Him to His heavenly Father. Our life should also be a life of sacrifice. This human sacrifice attains its end in three parts, and the sacrifice of the Mass comprises the same in its three parts. Christ stands before the door and knocks; at the Introit he celebrates His entrance into our hearts. During the prophetic part of the Mass, Christ leads us by the hand, on the way of purification by our living faith; in the second part, the sacerdotal, He leads us on the way of sanctification by our hope and confidence in God; in the third part, finally, the kingly, He leads us by love on the way of intimate union, which attains its consummation through Holy Communion.

6. The Sacrifice of the Mass comprises the entire sacrificial life of the Christian; it is, therefore, the central point of the Sacraments. Baptism and Penance, the so-called Sacraments of the Dead, lead us on the way of purification; the five others, the Sacraments of the Living, lead us on the way of sanctification, and the Communion especially leads us on the way of intimate union with God. But this union with God through Holy Communion is obtained for us in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass:

7. Therefore we distingush the three following divisions of the Mass:

(1) Part first, which extends from the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory, prepares the sacrifice, and shows us the Redeemer as prophet, leading the Christian participator on the way of purification.

(2) The second part, from the Offertory to the Pater Noster, completes the consecration of the sacrifice, showing us Christ as priest, and leading the partaker on the way of sanctification.

(3) The third part begins with the Pater Noster and lasts until the end of Mass; it contains the consummation of the sacrifice through Holy Communion; showing us our Redeemer as king, and leading us on the way of intimate union with God.

PART FIRST.

Preparation for the Holy Sacrifice—Christ as Prophet; Way of Purification.

THE INTROIT.

1. While the celebrant and the acolytes enter the sanctuary, the choir sings the so-called Introit (entrance), consisting of an antiphon, part of a psalm and the Gloria Patri. In the meantime, the celebrant prays at the foot of the altar the psalm "Judica me Deus," the Confiteor and accompanying prayers, kisses the altar, and, in solemn High Mass, incenses it.

2. The entrance of the priest at Mass reminds us of the Advent of Christ upon earth, His union with man by His Incarnation. But the singing of the choir reminds us of the longing for the Messiah. So should the Christian long for the coming of the Redeemer into his heart.

3. This longing for union with the Redeemer is also expressed by the celebrant, when he prays the psalm "Judica me Deus," alternately with the people who are represented by the acolytes. This psalm expressive of joy, is omitted in Masses for the Dead and in those said during the time of the Passion. Before beginning Mass, all sign themselves with the sign of the Cross, because, according to Apostolic tradition, the early Christians began all their ac-

tions with the sign of the Cross; but this sign is made before Mass especially, because that Sacrifice in which the three Divine Persons participated is about to begin, and its central point is the Cross.

In early Christian times only clerics were admitted to the service of the altar; now, boys are chiefly employed, in whom we expect to find great purity and innocence. They wear white because it is not only more becoming for Divine Service, but also to show that we should assist at Mass with pure hearts, and at the same time think of the Angels who hover invisibly around the altar offering their homage and adoration to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

4. After the psalm the celebrant and the acolyte, one after the other, pray the Confiteor. The longing for the Redeemer presumes that we acknowledge ourselves sinners, therefore the Confiteor follows; even in the oldest liturgies this confession is found. Like the contrite Publican, the celebrant and the servant bow down and strike their breasts as a sign of their penitential spirit.

By the term liturgy we understand here, the manner in which Mass is to be celebrated as ordered by the Church. The liturgies of the Eastern and Western churches differ in non-essentials, but are entirely alike in their essential parts. The Roman liturgy is the most common and is found all over the earth, whereas the others are limited to a few countries.

5. After the Confiteor the acolyte implores God, on behalf of the people, to have mercy on the celebrant. Then the priest does the same for them. This is to denote the intimate relationship existing between priest and people. They pray with each other and for each other, that they may all be worthy to offer to God this most august Sacrifice.

At the Confiteor all the faithful who assist at Mass should awaken acts of contrition, so as not to be deprived of the fruits of the Mass by their sins.

6. These prayers being ended, the priest ascends the steps of the altar and resting his hands upon the sacred table, kisses it respectfully. The altar is the sanctuary upon which Christ with His Angels and Saints is enthroned; therefore in every altar relics of the saints are enclosed, whom the priest implores for their intercession.

From every altar, Christ and the whole Church Triumphant commune with the Church Militant. When the priest ascends the altar he separates from the people, as it were, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord, as mediator. He kisses the altar to express his love and devotion, as well as his joyous submission and union with Christ, who wishes now to offer the Holy Sacrifice, by the hands of the priest.

7. In solemn High Mass, the priest incenses the altar. In the Old Law the priest was commanded to envelope the tabernacle with a cloud of incense, before he sprinkled the sacrificial blood. The incensing

of the altar was customary even in the time of the Apostles, and is found in all liturgies; it is a beautiful emblem of prayer. The incense is annihilated in the flame, and arises to heaven, dispensing sweet perfume. Prayer likewise comes from a heart glowing with love; it is an annihilation, a complete surrender of oneself to God; it ascends to heaven and pierces the clouds; it surrounds the worshiper with the perfume of virtue. The altar shall be enveloped in a cloud of the prayers of the faithful. The priest offers his prayers, and those of the faithful to Almighty God; his heart, therefore, should be an altar of sacrifice; for this reason, he is incensed after the altar is incensed.

8. After incensing the altar the priest says the Introit at the Epistle side of the altar, which in former times was sung only by the choir while the priest said the Judica. The Introit is now much shorter than formerly, its scope being the key to the entire Mass of the day; it is nothing more nor less than an expression of the longing for the Redeemer.

THE KYRIE.

1. The Kyrie Eleison follows the Introit. These Greek words signify: "Lord have mercy on us." It is a form of prayer that often appears in the Sacred Scriptures, and is very appropriately used here. The Introit represents the infinite love of the Son of God in His Incarnation, but with the advent of Christ upon earth, begins the time of grace and mercy, therefore the Kyrie very fittingly follows the Introit.

2. The Kyrie appears in all liturgies; formerly it was repeated as often as the priest wished, oftentimes increased by certain intercalary expressions touching the nature of the feast of the day. Thus on feasts of the Blessed Virgin it would read after this manner: "O Lord thou lover of virginity, illustrious Father and Mary's Creator, have mercy on us," and so on. In the Roman liturgy the Kyrie is repeated nine times.

3. This solemn petition, Kyrie Eleison, for mercy is said three times to God the Father for His manifold mercies; Christi Eleison is said three times to God the Son, the author of our redemption, and Kyrie Eleison is again thrice repeated to God the Holy Ghost, the sanctifier and consoler. The Father and the Holy Ghost are addressed in the same word Kyrie, because they have one and the same nature; but the Son in another word, Christi, because in addition to the divine nature He assumed human nature.

4. The Kyrie is repeated nine times to denote that the vacant places in the nine choirs of Angels will, in the course of time by the mercy of God, be filled by mankind.

Greek and Hebrew words are retained in the Roman liturgies, to signify that there is but one Church originally formed out of three different nations, viz., the Latin, the Greek, and the Hebrew, in which languages the Sacred Mysteries were first

celebrated. These three languages were hallowed by having been used to inscribe the title on the Cross.

THE GLORIA.

1. The first words of the Gloria in excelsis, or greater doxology, were sung by the angels at the birth of Christ: the author of the remaining words, as we have it now, is not definitely known, but by many it is accredited to St. Hilary, bishop of Poictiers, in France, A. D. 353. At all events this doxology was universally known since the fourth century. At first it was sung rarely and only by bishops at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; it was only in the eleventh century that priests in general were allowed to say the Gloria at the times prescribed by the Church.

2. The Gloria reminds us of the birth of Christ, the second act of the great sacrifice of our Redeemer. An angel announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds and the whole heavenly host continued the Canticle in exultant tones. The priest, likewise, in High Mass intones this joyous chant, which the choir continues. Man has reason to join in this celestial chant of the angel because Christ came upon earth to lead lost mankind back to God. He brought that peace into the world which was lost by sin; and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the true sacrifice of peace in which we may daily participate.

3. The Gloria is omitted in Masses of the season during Lent and Advent, and in Masses for the Dead.

THE COLLECTS.

1. At the conclusion of the Gloria the priest stoops down and kisses the alter, then having turned to the people salutes them with, Dominus vobiscum (The Lord be with you), words evidently taken from the Old and New Testaments, where we find them employed on various occasions.

Seven times the priest salutes the faithful with the Dominus vobiscum; seven times is the same response, "Et cum spiritu tuo" (and with Thy spirit) heard: At the Collect, the Gospel, the Offertory, the Preface, the Agnus Dei, the Post Communion and the Ite Missa est. Seven is the number of the Holy Spirit, called septiform, in the chant of the Church; the faithful beg for His seven divine gifts at each salutation. By kissing the altar the priest expresses his union with Christ, and from Him he imparts this blessed salutation to the faithful. He extends his arms towards the people as if to embrace them and unite them with Christ. The people salute him with the words, "Et cum Spiritu tuo"; this exchange of salutations denotes that the people and the priest should be one in mind and soul.

In the liturgy of the East, the salutation: "Pax vobis" (Peace be to you) is used. This salutation our Divine Lord always made use of in greeting His

disciples after His resurrection. To establish a slight difference between a bishop's manner of saying Mass, and that of a priest, the bishop was allowed to retain the use of the "Pax vobis" after the Gloria; upon every other occasion he says: "Dominus vobiscum," like an ordinary priest.

2. After having said the "Dominus vobiscum," the priest returns to the Epistle corner of the altar and reads the Collects, beginning with "Oremus" (Let us pray). Collect is from the Latin colligere, to gather together, because the common wants of the whole people were, as it were, brought together in it and laid before Almighty God by His ambassador, the priest. A very edifying custom of ancient times was for the people to enter into a sort of silent prayer, after they had heard "Oremus," and remain in this quiet meditation until the general prayer was announced. On certain rogation and penitential days the deacon, after the Oremus, said "Flectamus genua"; (Let us bend the knee). Thereupon all fell upon their knees and prayed until the deacon said "Levate," (Rise up).

3. Another act of oblation of our Redeemer was His continuous prayer; His whole life was a life of prayer. This constant oblation of Christ is presented to us in the Collects. Prayer is also necessary for the support and maintenance of Christian life. Therefore every Christian should unite intimately in the sacrificial prayers of Christ, which are offered Him in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

4. The Collects vary every day, because in the Sacrifice of the Mass different graces are offered us, corresponding to the different seasons of the year. To implore these different graces, is the object of the Collects.

5. In every Sacrifice of the Mass there are three different Collects: the Collects after the Gloria, the Secret before the Preface; and the Post Communion. They correspond to the parts of the Mass: Preparation, offering and consummation of the sacrifice. On occasions of great solemnity usually only one Collect is said in each of these three parts, because all the attention should be directed to the mystery of the feast; on minor feast days more are added corresponding to the feast and the season.

6. The priest recites the Collects with raised and extended arms. Our first parents stretched their hands after the forbidden fruit, and thus brought a curse upon the world. Christ, the second Adam, stretched His arms out upon the Cross, and thereby gained for us salvation; therefore the priest has always prayed with outstretched arms during the Mass, in which the sacrifice of the Cross is continued. The priest is a second Moses, who prays with outstretched arms, to lead his people to victory.

7. The Collects close usually with the words: "Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen." Our prayers are granted only through the

merits of Christ; therefore the priest joins his hands at these words, to place his prayers, as it were, in the hands of Jesus, who in turn offers them to His heavenly Father. The server replies "Amen," a Hebrew word, meaning "May it be so," thus assenting to the prayers of the priest.

THE EPISTLE.

1. The Epistle reflects the ministry of Christ testified to by the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles. This ministry should prepare our hearts, lead them to Christ, who speaks Himself to them in the Gospels, therefore the Epistle precedes the Gospel.

2. In early Christian times passages out of the prophecies were read, later, extracts from the letters of the Apostles. In the Roman liturgy the Epistle is taken sometimes from the Old Testament, sometimes from the New. As the readings from the letters of the Apostles are more numerous than those taken from the Prophets, they are called Epistles, that is, letters. Formerly the Epistles were read by the lectors from an elevated lectern or pulpit known as the Ambo, placed generally in the nave of the Church; since the eighth century the subdeacon reads the Epistle on solemn occasions; on ordinary occasions the priest reads it himself. The series of Epistles and Gospels as we have them now were arranged by St. Jerome, and introduced by Pope Damasus I. (†384) in the fourth century.

3. The priest lays his hands on the book while reading the Epistle, to show that we should be ready to do what the Epistle prescribes.

4. At the conclusion of the Epistle the people answer: "Deo gratias"—Thanks be to God—as an evidence of the gratitude we owe to our Creator for the spiritual nourishment of His Divine Word, not accorded to other nations. These are the sentiments that should animate the faithful during the reading of the Epistles, and Gradual which follows:

5. The Gradual, so-called, not as some suppose from the steps of the altar—for it was never read from there—but rather from the steps of the Ambo. In early Christian times, the Gradual consisted of an entire psalm. In the sixth century, Gregory the Great ordered it to be as we have it now, consisting of three verses, which vary according to the feast of the day.

THE GOSPEL.

1. As soon as the Gospel had been written by the Evangelists it was read at the Divine Service. At first this was done by the lector, but very soon this important office was given to the deacon. In all liturgies the reading of the Gospel is attended with great solemnities; for the Church listens with the greatest respect to the word of her Bridegroom contained in the gospel.

2. At solemn High Mass, the deacon incenses the Gospel, and at its conclusion he also incenses the celebrant. The Gospel is a necessary part of the Mass; it is the Divine Word, in which the great Sacrifice is clothed. Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed it spreads the perfume of virtue, and the incense of prayer ascends to Heaven. The priest is incensed after the Gospel, because he is the bearer of the Divine Word, proclaims and interprets it; he is, as it were, consecrated for the sermon which follows the Gospel.

3. On solemn occasions lighted candles are carried at the Gospel, to testify our joy at receiving the glad tidings, as well as to show our respect for Him, who is the Light of the World.

4. While the priest announces the Gospel, he makes the sign of the Cross with his thumb upon the Missal itself, and then upon himself on the forehead, mouth and breast; the people sign themselves in the same manner. The Gospel contains the teachings of the Crucified, and priest and people make the sign of the Cross to show that they are not ashamed of His doctrine, but will preserve it in grateful remembrance, believe in it, and proclaim it to the world. Therefore the people stand while the Gospel is read, to show their readiness to follow its teachings.

5. At the conclusion of the Gospel the priest kisses the book; the acolyte, for the people, answers "Laus tibi Christi"—"Praise be to Thee, O Christ," as an expression of gratitude for the doctrine of Christ contained in the Gospel.

6. Formerly, the sermon always followed the Gospel, and continued the line of thought expressed in the Gospel of the day, therefore belonging to it. In many places, the sermon is now given after Mass.

7. In early times, the moment the sermon was ended, or in the absence of a sermon, at the end of the Gospel, the Catechumens were dismissed from the church, and then the Mass of the faithful began with closed doors. At this so-called Mass of the Catechumens even the Jews and the heathens were allowed to be present, but were then dismissed immediately by the deacon, with the words: "The doors! the doors! All upright!"

THE CREED.

1. The Creed is a profession of faith as framed in the year 325, at the General Council of Nice, a town of Bithnia, in Asia Minor, and received an accretion at the Council of Constantinople in 381. In the Churches of the East even in the seventh century, it was universally prayed at Mass; in the Churches of the West, it was introduced much later.

2. The Creed comprises in a few words all the mysteries of Christian doctrine. It terminates the prophetic part of the Mass. Therefore the priest and the people sing and pray the Creed together, to profess their faith openly.

3. The Creed forms a fitting transition to the second part, the real sacrifice: From the living faith springs forth the true love of sacrifice; therefore the faithtful should strengthen their belief by acts of faith, in order to partake intimately in this Holy Sacrifice.

4. The Creed is not said every day, but chiefly on those days when some mystery of our holy faith is celebrated; viz., on Sundays, feasts of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, and of those saints who labored to establish the faith, such as Apostles, and Doctors, and also during the octave of these feasts.

PART SECOND.

The Consecration of the Holy Sacrifice—Jesus Christ as High Priest—Way of Sanctification.

SUMMARY.

This part of the Mass extends from the Offertory to the Pater Noster, and shows our Lord as High Priest, first consecrating Himself by prayer to His heavenly Father and then consummating His never-ending Sacrifice. Therefore this part falls into two divisions: in the first part the Sacrifice is offered through prayer to our heavenly Father; it comprises the Offertory; in the second part the Sacrifice is consecrated, sacrificed in an unbloody manner; it begins with the Preface and lasts to the Pater Noster. The central point of this division, as well as of the whole Sacrifice of the Mass, is the Consecration; or Elevation.

THE OFFERTORY.

1. In early times the faithful brought bread and wine to the altar at the Offertory; the best of these gifts was selected for the Holy Sacrifice. All that remained, over and above what was necessary for the immediate wants of the altar, went into a common fund for the sustenance of the clergy and the poor of the parish. While the gifts were being offered the choir sang one or more psalms. Now the Offertory consists of only one verse of a psalm. This Offertory always expresses the thought of the day, similar to the Introit.

2. First the priest salutes the people in the same manner as at the Collect. At the Collect he invites the people to unite with him in prayer; now he calls upon them to participate in the Sacrifice. He embraces them again in spirit, to unite them intimately to himself, but also to warn them that they must approach the altar in a spirit of charity without hatred or enmity.

3. The corporal is now spread upon the altar, if it has not been done already. It represents the winding-sheet in which Christ's body was wrapped by Joseph of Arimathea; it is to receive the body of Christ at the Consecration.

The use of the corporal rests upon Apostolic authority, and even Pope Sylvester, in 314, strictly forbade it to be made of silk or of any other material except white linen. The hearts of those who

partake of the Sacrifice should also be pure and white like the corporal. This sacred cloth when not in use is kept folded up in the burse.

4. The sacred vessels—chalice and paten—are especially worthy of respect and veneration, because they come in close contact with the Eucharistic Species. They remain covered, therefore, with the so-called veil, until the beginning of the real Sacrifice; in the first centuries the veil had to be of linen, but now is of silk, corresponding to the color of the vestments.

The palla serves to cover the mouth of the chalice, to prevent dust or flies from falling into it. It must, like the corporal, be of linen.

The chalice is the most sacred of all the vessels of the altar; it represents the Chalice in which Christ for the first time offered His most Sacred Blood. It also reminds us of the Chalice of His passion, which for our sake he drank to the dregs; it is a symbol of the Heart of Jesus from which His sacred blood flows in a stream. The priest's heart is the chalice, as it were, which receives the blood of Christ. The chalice must be gilded out of the respect we owe to the most Sacred Blood of Christ, and because the Divine Heart is filled with the gold of charity; so should our hearts burn with this gold of charity.

The purificator or mundatory, a linen cloth used for cleansing the chalice, is of recent date. It has a small cross in the middle to distinguish it from the lavabo towel, which has the cross at the end.

The paten, that small silver or gold dish something like a flat saucer, which covers the mouth of the chalice and upon which the large bread for consecration is placed until the Offertory, is of Apostolic origin. In former times it was much larger.

The paten is a symbol of the hearts of the faithful because it is used only at the Offertory and Communion in which the faithful participate; at other times it remains concealed under the corporal or in the hands of the subdeacon; it must also be gilded, and this broad gold paten typifies the great love which should animate the faithful during the Divine Sacrifice.

5. The chalice is then uncovered and the oblation of the Host resting on the paten is made with the following words: "Accept, Holy Father, Omnipotent, Eternal God, this immaculate Host, which I, Thy unworthy servant, offer Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offenses and negligences, and for all who are present; moreover, for all faithful Christians, living and dead, that it may avail both me and them unto salvation and life everlasting." Then with the paten he makes the sign of the Cross on the corporal, and places the Host thereon. The Cross is the sacrificial altar upon which the Sacrifice was consummated, and here is now renewed. The faithful should also place their offerings spiritually, upon the paten, in order to unite them with those of the priest.

6. The priest then pours wine and water into the chalice. This mixture of water and wine is an emblem of the Incarnation of Christ. As here the few drops of water are absorbed by the wine, and at the same time changed into wine, so Christ has indissolubly united His human nature with the divine, and consequently given His human nature a higher dignity. The inseparable union of Christ with His Church is also represented by the mingling of the water with the wine; and no less the union of our Redeemer with each individual faithful soul, who sacrifices himself out of love for Christ. The priest blesses the water but not the wine. The wine represents Jesus Christ, the "true vine," but the water denotes the faithful, who need the blessing, not so Christ. The priest, spiritually, places in the chalice the hearts of all those present, who desire to be united with Christ.

Christ Himself at His last Supper mixed water with wine; this is the undisputed tradition of the Church. The custom of the Jews, not to bless the wine before it was mixed with water, points to the same fact. This mingling of water and wine should remind us specially of the blood and water which flowed from the Heart of Jesus Christ when He hung on the Cross. The priest now offers the chalice to his heavenly Father, with prayers similar to those at the offering of the Host; making a cross with the chalice; and placing it on the corporal, he covers it with the pall.

In the two short prayers which follow the Offertory, the priest expresses the spirit of sacrifice, that is, humility, and confidence in the assistance of grace.

7. At solemn High Mass, the priest incenses the bread and wine of the Sacrifice, then the altar, the celebrant and server; and finally the people. This incensing is a dedication of the gifts of sacrifice, the place of sacrifice and the one who offers sacrifice; it forms, as it were, a sacred circle within which, the Sacrifice of Christ and that of the people is accomplished. As the incense is consumed in the flame, so Christ consumed Himself out of love for us, and so should the hearts of those who offer themselves to God be consumed with the fire of divine love.

8. Having recited the prayer: "Come, O Sanctifier," the priest goes to the Epistle corner of the altar and there washes the tips of his fingers, but only of the thumb and index finger of each hand, as it is these only, that are allowed to touch the Blessed Sacrament; for which reason they are sometimes called the canonical fingers, as it is they that were anointed with Holy Oil at his ordination. While performing this ablution the priest recites that portion of the twenty-fifth psalm which begins with: "I will wash my hands among the innocent." Besides the literal reason for this ablution, there is a beautiful mystical reason also—to-wit, that in order to offer so tremendous a Sacrifice, as that in which the

victim is none else than the Son of God Himself, the priest's conscience should be free from the slightest stain of sin. The priest does not remain at the middle of the altar while washing his hands, but goes to the Epistle corner, out of respect to the Blessed Sacrament enclosed in the tabernacle, and for the crucifix. When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, to show still greater respect he descends one step at the Epistle side, and standing, so as to have his back turned toward the wall and not to the altar, performs the ablution there. The Church is very exact in all that concerns the reverence due to the Holy Eucharist. The washing of hands was customary even in the earliest times and is in commemoration of the washing of the disciples' feet by our Lord, to prepare them for the reception of the Blessed Sacrament.

9. After washing his hands the priest returns to the middle of the altar and recites a prayer to the Holy Trinity and the Church Triumphant. He unites himself with the heavenly host, inviting them to participate in this Holy Sacrifice, and at the same time implores their intercession in heaven. Here the Church Militant unites with the Church Triumphant in the praise of God.

10. The priest now turns around to the people and exhorts them to pray with the words: "Orate fratres," "Pray, brethren," which he continues as follows: "That my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty." He turns

then in a perfect circle to the altar again, in order to exhort the faithful on all sides, to pray. This form of summoning the faithful to pray was in use in the early centuries of Christianity. The priest now begins the "Secretae," or secret prayers, therefore he previously asks all present to unite their prayers with his, that he may present them to his heavenly Father.

11. It is called the "Secret" because the priest says the prayers secretly. This silence is to denote the intense reverence with which this prayer should be said, and to give the faithful an opportunity of offering their own special prayers and mementos. The priest offers them jointly with his own to Almighty God. This prayer is the second Collect; it changes daily like the first Collect (after the Gloria). At the Secret as many prayers are said as at the first Collect. At the conclusion of the Secret the priest folds his hands, to gather, as it were, the prayers of the faithful. Then raising his voice he closes this prayer in an audible tone with the words: "Per omnia saecula, saeculorum," to which the servers answer: "Amen," by which the people assent to the prayers of the priest.

THE PREFACE.

1. Before Christ entered on His Passion, He chanted a canticle of thanksgiving at His last supper. In like manner the priest, before the consummation of the Holy Sacrifice, chants the Preface, rendering proper thanks to Almighty God.

2. The Preface is a prelude or introduction to the Canon of the Mass and is of Apostolic origin. In the first centuries every Mass had its own Preface, later the number was limited by rule to eleven as we now have them.

3. At first, the priest sang alternately with the people to move them to devotion and thanksgiving. The "Sursum corda" (Lift up your hearts) should stimulate all present to raise their hearts from earth and direct them to God. The priest raises his hands at the words, as if to offer the hearts of his congregation to God, drawing nearer and nearer to God until, finally, he unites with the angelic choirs in singing: "Holy, holy, holy."

THE CANON.

1. Canon means rule. The Church uses this word to denote that the Canon is the unchangeable rule, according to which the Sacrifice of the New Testament is to be offered. It is of Apostolic origin, excepting a slight addition by Pope Gregory the Great, in the seventh century, since when, a hand has never touched it.

2. It has been customary from time immemorial to recite the Canon in secret, out of the great respect that is due to this solemn portion of the Mass, as well, as to secure the utmost recollection on the part of the priest and the people. The High Priest of the Old Testament went alone into the Holy of Holies, and Christ went alone in silence, like an

Easter lamb to the sacrifice. The priest likewise, after he has combined the wants and supplications of all present with his own prayers, begins in secret that prayer by which the mystery of the body and blood of Christ is consecrated. Priest and people should now especially place themselves in the presence of God, exclude all worldly distractions and pray from the depths of their hearts.

3. Since in the Canon the commemoration of the Passion of our Lord is renewed, a picture of the Crucifixion is placed in the Missal at the beginning of the Canon, to imprint the sufferings of Christ still more vividly on the mind and heart.

4. Christ offered Himself to His Heavenly Father on Mount Olivet for the sins of the world. Burdened with this debt of sin, He prayed three times. At the beginning of the Canon, He likewise offers Himself by the hands of the priest for the whole Church. The priest prays, first for the entire Church, then in particular for those present as well as for those of whom he wishes to make special mention. At the third prayer, he unites with the saints in heaven, because Christ Himself was strengthened by an angel at His third prayer.

5. The sign of the Cross is now often repeated over the Host and the Chalice, not only before, but also after the Elevation. This oft-repeated sign of the Cross, imparting strength and grace, is to remind us that it is the Sacrifice of the Cross which is here renewed. The sacrificial offerings, as well

as the hearts of the worshipers, should be purified and sanctified before the Elevation by the sign of the Cross. In like manner, after the Elevation, the priest and the faithful are prepared for actual or spiritual Communion, and intimately united with Christ. In some parts of the Canon there is only one Cross made; in other parts three, and again in others five are made. One Cross signifies the unity of the Divine Essence, two Crosses signify the duality of natures in our Lord, three the Blessed Trinity, and five typify the Five Wounds.

6. In early times a tablet was used, upon which the Memento was inscribed, and read by the deacon or subdeacon during the Canon; at a Low Mass the priest read it himself. This tablet, called diptych, consisted of three separate columns. In the first column the names of the saints were enrolled, at first Apostles and martyrs, later also holy bishops and confessors. The second column contained the names of those who were illustrious among the living, or held places of eminence either in the temporal or spiritual order, such as the Supreme Pontiff, the patriarchs, archbishop or bishop of the diocese. In this same column were also inserted the names of those for whose special intention the Mass was offered, or who had contributed bountifully toward the wants of the altar, and the support of its sacred ministers. The third column contained the names of those who departed this life in full communion with the Church, but who were not otherwise in any

degree remarkable. The substance of these three columns is now distributed among the following prayers of the Mass; viz., the first Memento, the Communicantes, the Nobis quoque peccatoribus, and the second Memento. We still have these three columns, but not in the same order. As it is now, the second column precedes the first: in it the priest mentions the Supreme Pontiff, and the bishop or archbishop of the diocese, then the faithful, for whom he prays, either out of love or duty; thereupon follows the first column; in which the priest mentions the names of twenty-four saints, twelve being Apostles and twelve martyrs. They are to remind us of the twenty-four ancients who surround the throne; the twelve Apostles typify the twelve foundation stones of the heavenly Jerusalem, and the twelve martyrs take the place of the 144,000 sealed, (12,000 out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel), as St. John describes in the Apocalypse. In this first column no other saint can now be inserted. The third column or division, the Memento for the Dead, now comes after the Elevation.

7. The priest holding his hands extended over the oblation implores God to graciously accept the Sacrifice about to be offered. As in the Old Law the sins of the people were symbolically placed upon the Scape Goat, so Christ took the sins of the world upon Himself, and laden with these sins consummated His Passion. In a similar manner the priest now also lays our wants, the wants of the Church and the sins of the faithful upon the Divine Head of the Reedeemer.

THE CONSECRATION.

1. The Consecration is the heart of the Canon and of the entire Mass; it is even the life spring of the Church. As the blood from the heart circulates through all parts of the body, so the blood of the Redeemer flows through the Consecration, into all parts of Christ's Church.

2. The Elevation, or Consecration is ushered in by the fivefold sign of the Cross made over the Oblation. This is symbolical of the five wounds through which our Redeemer completed His sacrifice on the Cross. The victim is already laid on the Cross, the five wounds are opened; the sacrifice follows, the death of Christ on the Cross is renewed.

3. The priest repeats the words, and does precisely what our Lord did at His last supper when He changed the bread and wine into His body and blood, thereby effecting in the name of Christ the act of Consecration. The words of consecration which the Church received from Christ through the Apostles, have creative power. As the word of God caused heaven and earth to come forth out of nothing so the words of consecration effect the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of our Lord. At these words the Redeemer descends from heaven, and offers Himself on the altar to His heavenly Father for the salvation of the world.

Although Christ is truly present under each species, nevertheless both species are necessary in order to represent the separation of His precious blood from His sacred body.

Pure should the hearts be, that partake of the Sacrifice, and filled with devotion and reverence.

4. As soon as the words of consecration have been spoken over the Host, the priest bends the knee and adores the God incarnate, present on the altar; then he raises the Sacred Host on high so that all may see it.

He does the same, likewise, with the Chalice when he has pronounced the words of consecration over it. This elevation of the Host and the Chalice reminds us, first, of the elevation of Christ on the Cross, upon which He consummated His sacrifice. It reminds us furthermore, of how Christ offers Himself to His heavenly Father as mediator for fallen man,—an inexhaustible source of grace for the Church, and for each individual soul a sure guide on the way of the Cross. The faithful also fall on their knees and unite in worshiping our Redeemer, they thank Him for graces received, beg forgiveness for their sins as well as for the sins of others, and implore Him for graces of every kind. There is certainly, no time more appropriate to lay our wants before God than at the time of Elevation.

5. At the Elevation of the Sacred Host and Chalice, the acolyte gives a sign with the bell for the faithful to adore. This signal should awaken devotion in the lukewarm and cold of heart, but in the devout it should increase the flame of divine love. As the silver tones of the bell undulate through the church, so should the hearts of the faithful beat in

unison with their heavenly Bridegroom. He hearkens so gladly to the harmonious tone of love and confidence, and to the prayers of pure hearts. Wherever the custom prevails of ringing the church bell at Elevation, it is to announce the moment of consecration to the faithful, who could not be present at Divine Service, so that they may at least participate in this most holy Sacrifice.

6. The three orations after the Consecration remind us of the three hours, that Christ hung on the Cross, and of the love with which He sacrificed Himself to His heavenly Father for the salvation of the world. These prayers and this sacrificial love continue throughout the Mass.

7. The priest again makes the sign of the Cross five times over the Chalice and the Host. The five wounds are now opened, the sacred blood of the Redeemer flows in streams through the entire Church, and into the heart of every member who participates in this Sacrifice.

8. In the second oration the priest mentions the sacrifice of Abel, Abraham and Melchisedech, because these three sacrifices were prototypes of Christ's sacrifice. In Abel we see Christ as prophet, in Abraham as priest, and in Melchisedech as king.

9. In the third oration the priest, deeply bowed, prays that God will be pleased to have the fruits of this Sacrifice brought before His Most Sacred Majesty, by the hands of an angel. Even in the Old

Testament we often read that the angels took part in the sacrifices; how much more so will the priest of the New Covenant have angels at his side to assist him, and adore our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The priest kisses the altar, and then, making the sign of the Cross on himself, prays that from this fount of grace manifold blessings may fill his heart.

THE MEMENTO.

1. After His death, Christ descended into Limbo to bring the joyous message of redemption to the Just, who were awaiting His arrival. In like manner the Church, as soon as the Crucifixion of our Lord is renewed in the Consecration, descends into Purgatory, and seeks to obtain participation in the reopened stream of grace for the Just detained there.

2. The Sacrifice of the Mass is, as it were, a court of justice. God is about to pass judgment on mankind, but the guilty, at the Memento for the Living, place themselves under the protection of our Redeemer, who obtains pardon for them by the Consecration: therefore the Memento for the Living comes before the Elevation; judgment, however, has been already pronounced on the Dead, hence they are remembered after the Elevation, in order to obtain mercy for them through the blood of Christ.

3. The priest strikes his breast and says aloud: "Nobis quoque peccatoribus" (And to us sinners). Many who were present at the death of our Lord, and seeing the wonders that took place, striking their

breasts, confessed the Godhead of Christ. The priest likewise strikes his breast after he has seen the mystery which has just taken place. The stream of grace has already poured over the Church Suffering; now the priest prays that the Church Militant on earth may partake of this grace. But only those who are humble and contrite of heart partake of this grace; therefore, he strikes his breast and confesses himself a sinner. He prays in a loud voice that is from the depths of his heart to the Lord, and exhorts all present to unite with him in this prayer. The contents of this prayer are, that through the Sacrifice of the Mass the Church Militant and the Church Suffering may be led into the Church Triumphant.

4. Even to inanimate nature, blessings must flow from the Holy Sacrifice; this is expressed in the short prayer following, in which the priest makes the sign of the Cross three times over the species of bread, wine, and water, inanimate forms of nature raised to the substance of the sacred offering, becoming thereby the source of grace for all creation. In early times, it was customary to bless new fruits and products of various kinds at this part of the Mass, such as grapes, milk, honey, oil, wine, etc. Even to this day the Holy Oils are solemnly blessed at this part of the Mass.

5. At the close of the Canon the priest uncovers the chalice and taking the Sacred Host between the thumb and index finger of the right hand makes three crosses with it over the chalice while saying:

"Through Him, with Him, and in Him," then two crosses between the Chalice and himself in a direct line, at the expression "to Thee, God the Father Almighty in the unity of the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory," he raises the Chalice and Host a few inches from the altar. This is called the minor Elevation, and here the Canon ends. The three crosses over the chalice denote the Son of God, Who offers Himself in His threefold office, of prophet, priest and king. The other two crosses glorify the Father and the Holy Ghost; these two persons form one essence with the Son, therefore the crosses are made with the Sacred Host. The Elevation of the Chalice with the Sacred Host shows us that the entire creation is, through the Holy Sacrifice, united to God from Whom it was separated by sin.

PART THIRD.

Communion—Christ as King. Intimate Union with Christ.

SUMMARY.

In Holy Communion the kingdom of Christ is extended and confirmed. In receiving Holy Communion Christ becomes the King of our hearts; therefore, the Communion is the central point of the third part of the Mass, which begins with the Pater Noster and continues to the end of Mass.

PATER NOSTER.

1. The "Per omnia saecula saeculorum" (world without end), which the priest says or sings in a loud voice, forms the transition from the second to the third part of the Mass. For as all honor and glory redounds through Jesus Christ, to the honor and glory of His heavenly Father, so from the Father all graces flow to us.

2. The following short preface precedes the Pater Noster: "Being admonished by salutary precepts, and taught by divine institution, we presume to say: Our Father," etc. This preface refers not only to the Pater Noster but also to the subsequent part of the Mass.

3. The Pater Noster was, from the beginning, connected with the celebration of the Mass. It recalls to our minds the special moment of the work of our redemption, when after the Ascension the Apostles and Disciples continued in prayer, to prepare for the coming of the Holy Ghost.

This prayer which our Lord Himself taught us contains all the needs of mankind. In the Western Church it is the priest alone who says the "Pater Noster," but in the Eastern Church it is said by the people and priest together. It is said before Communion because this prayer is the best preparation for Communion.

4. In the Mass, the Pater Noster must be said with special reference to the Holy Sacrifice; there-

fore the priest directs his eyes to the sacred Host while saying it. And in solemn high Masses the subdeacon brings the paten to the altar so that the "daily bread" for the faithful may be placed upon it, the paten being a symbol of the heart.

5. The prayer following is a prayer for peace. It is a continuation of the last petition of the "Pater Noster,"—"Deliver us from evil." When all evil is removed then peace will enter. The priest prays for this freedom from evil while holding the paten in his hand, which he had previously wiped with the purificator. When the priest prays for peace he blesses himself with the paten, then kisses it, and lays the Sacred Host upon it. A compact of peace was made upon the Cross, and Christ, reposing in the form of bread upon the paten, imparts peace to all who are willing to carry the cross. Here priest and people unite to obtain peace.

6. Then the priest breaks the Sacred Host over the chalice in three parts and drops one part into the chalice. The breaking of the Sacred Host was instituted by Christ Himself at His last supper, when He broke the bread and gave it to His Apostles. This denotes that Christ wishes to impart Himself to the faithful. Even in early times the Host was divided into three parts; one part was mingled with the wine; another part was consumed by the priest, and the third part was given to the faithful. By this we are to understand the Communion of the entire Church,—a communion of the priest and a

communion of the faithful. The mingling of a part with the Sacred Blood, denotes the indissoluble espousals of Christ with His Church—a perpetual Pentecost, as it were, in which the union between Christ and His Church is consummated. The faithful are those guests that were invited to the wedding feast; but only those who actually or spiritually receive Holy Communion, accept the invitation.

THE AGNUS DEI.

1. The Agnus Dei was introduced into the Mass by Pope Sergius (†701). At first it was sung by the choir while the priest divided the Sacred Host. It is the repetition of those words with which St. John the Baptist called the attention of his disciples to Jesus. It is repeated three times to denote the ardor with which this call of prayer is offered, and also refers to the three parts into which the Sacred Host is divided.

2. Having recited the Agnus Dei, the priest bows a little and resting his hands upon the altar, recites three prayers, without changing his posture. The first is a petition to Almighty God for that peace which the world cannot give; the second asks for deliverance from all iniquity by virtue of the body and blood of our Divine Redeemer; and the third, that the reception of the same body and blood may prove a remedy for all infirmities of soul and body. On solemn occasions, after the first prayer, the kiss of peace is given. This symbol of reconciliation

friendship and peace is of Apostolic origin, and in early times was also given to the laity. Later an embrace was substituted for the kiss, but this now is limited to the clergy. It reminds us of the admonition of the Lord: "Therefore, if thou offerest thy gift at the altar, and there shalt remember that thy brother hath any thing against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and first go to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gifts." The two prayers which follow prepare the heart for Holy Communion.

HOLY COMMUNION.

1. Annihilation is necessary for the completion of a sacrifice; this takes place in the Unbloody Sacrifice, through Holy Communion. Christ is annihilated in giving Himself as food for the faithful. And as it is the priest through whom Christ the Lord offers Himself, so by the Communion of the priest the Sacrifice is completed. It is also the wish of the Church that the faithful should communicate, so that the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice may flow to them in richer abundance.

2. In former times Holy Communion was administered to the faithful only at Mass after the Communion of the priest; out of the Mass only to the sick or to captives.

3. The priest communicates under both forms, but the faithful only under the form of bread. Until the twelfth century the faithful also communicated

under both forms, but only at the Mass, out of the Mass, only under the form of bread. Even at the Mass it was permitted to those of the faithful with whom wine did not agree to refrain from partaking of the chalice. Both kinds are necessary for the Sacrifice of the Mass; therefore priests must communicate under both forms.

4. Immediately before Communion the priest takes the Sacred Host in his left hand, strikes his breast three times with his right hand, and repeats the words of the Centurion: "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; say only the word and my soul shall be healed." The Centurion spoke these words in humility, faith and confidence, so should priest and people repeat them with the same sentiments.

5. The priest raises the Host to about the height of his eyes, and tracing with it the form of a cross in front of him, says: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to life everlasting. Amen." He then stoops down, and resting his elbows reverently upon the altar, receives the Sacred Host. After this he stands erect and pauses awhile in solemn meditation, with his hands joined before his face.

Next follows the Communion of the Chalice. To this end the priest removes the pall from the mouth of the chalice, and having made a genuflection as before, recites the words, "What shall I render to the Lord for all the good things that He has ren-

dered unto me?" (Psalm cxv). He then takes the paten in his hand and gathers up with it from the corporal, any loose particles that may have remained upon the latter from contact with the Sacred Host, all of which he allows to drop into the chalice by the aid of the thumb and index finger of his right hand. After this he places his hand on the chalice, saying: "I will receive the Chalice of Salvation and call upon the name of the Lord; praising I will invoke the Lord and will be safe from my enemies." Then placing the paten under his chin with his left hand, and taking the chalice in his right, he makes the sign of the Cross and communicates with the words: "May the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to life everlasting. Amen."

6. The server rings the bell at the words: "Domine non sum dignus," just before the priest communicates; then those desirous of communicating advance to the sanctuary rails, where they kneel and placing the communion cloth under their chin await the approach of the priest. The server in the meantime recites the Confiteor on their behalf, while the priest is getting the Sacred Particles ready for distribution. Opening the tabernacle he takes the ciborium, in which the Sacred Particles are kept, and places it upon the corporal in front of him; uncovering it he makes another genuflection, turns a little towards the communicants, and pronounces over them the following prayers: "May the Almighty and Merciful God grant you pardon, absolution and

remission of your sins." While pronouncing this form of absolution, he makes the sign of the Cross over all at the communion railing, and having made a third genuflection takes the ciborium in his left hand, and holding a particle over it with his right, says in an audible tone: "Behold the lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world." "Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word and my soul shall be healed." The latter protestation he repeats three times, then descends to the railing and gives Communion to the communicants, always beginning at the Epistle side.

In administering the Sacrament to each person the priest says: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

7. After Communion the priest holds out the chalice to the server, who pours wine into it; this the celebrant drinks, then washes his fingers over the chalice, first with wine and then with water. This threefold purification is to signify that Holy Communion animates, penetrates, and purifies the Church, the clergy, and the faithful.

8. After he covers the chalice, the priest reads the Communion, which is a short antiphon bearing upon the feast of the day, and generally taken from the psalms. In former times it was customary to sing it with some portions of a psalm, or, if necessary, the entire psalm.

It is called Communion because it was sung while the priest administered Communion. It corresponds with the Introit and Offertory; and expresses the special grace which flows from this Holy Sacrifice, in addition to the general graces which emanate therefrom.

THE POST COMMUNION.

1. After receiving Holy Communion priest and people offer prayers of thanksgiving for the graces received. This is the substance of the prayers which follow. As the graces of the day vary, so must also our thanksgiving. This special thanksgiving is contained in the Post-Communion; it forms the third class of the Collects. The priest offers all the prayers of the congregation in thanksgiving to God.

2. The repeated greeting, "Dominus Vobiscum," is an admonition to the faithful that they should remain the whole day united with the priest in thanksgiving. The Church continues this thanksgiving in the prayers of the Breviary, in which this greeting often occurs.

3. The Ite missa est (Go, the Mass is ended) is a solemn dismissal of the faithful, and was customary in the earliest times. When the Gloria in excelsis is not said, "Benedicamus Domino" (Let us bless the Lord) is said, instead of Ite missa est. During Advent and Lent, the early Christians not only assisted at Mass, but also at the Canonical Hours which followed. In those days of longer and more fervent prayers, instead of dismissing the congrega-

tion they were invited to bless the Lord. These words have been preserved in the Church to remind us that it is necessary to sanctify the holy time of penance by prayer. In Masses for the dead there is no blessing or dismissal, because the people are supposed to remain for the absolution of the body and its interment. The priest on such occasions turns to the altar, and simply says: "Requiescat in pace." (May he rest in peace.) The Ite missa est is to remind us of the second Advent of Christ at the Last Judgment. As the Sacrifice of the Mass begins with the Introit and closes with the Ite missa est, so the great work of redemption begins with the Incarnation of Christ and ends with the day of judgment; from thence on, it will be continued in heaven as a sacrifice of praise.

4. Thereupon the priest says a short prayer, imploring mercy for himself and the faithful, then kisses the altar and turning to the people blesses them, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. In Masses for the dead this blessing is omitted. He then reads the Gospel of St. John. The priest prays for the people and blesses them, that they may be enabled to walk in the path of virtue and obtain strength to overcome the enemy in the battle of life.

When a feast falls on a Sunday, or other day which has a proper Gospel of its own, the Gospel of the day is read instead of the Gospel of St. John.

MASS FOR THE DEAD.

1. In early Christian times the body of the deceased was brought to the church, psalms were sung and many prayers were said, with readings from the Scriptures, which were often continued even during the night. From this originated our Office of the Dead. In some convents it is still customary to pray psalms night and day over the body of the departed, and the so-called wakes are relics of the early night-watches.

2. On the third day the faithful assembled again at the grave to pray, and offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, imploring God to open heaven for this soul as He Himself arose from the dead on the third day.

3. The same was done on the seventh day; the Creator rested on the seventh day, so the faithful implore God to grant eternal rest to the departed.

4. Also on the thirtieth, and in many places on the fortieth day, the people assembled again to offer prayers and Mass for the dead. This custom dates from the Old Testament.

5. In order that the memory of the departed might not be forgotten, the anniversary was commemorated in a similar manner.

6. These memorial days of the first Christian centuries are still retained; and on the third, seventh and thirtieth day, Mass for the dead may, generally, be said irrespective of the feast of the day.

7. Masses for the dead are, otherwise, restricted to days on which either no feast occurs, or on a feast of low rank. It must not necessarily be a Mass of the Dead; any other Mass may also be offered for the departed. In order to gain for the departed the indulgence of the so-called Privileged Altar it is required to say the Mass in black, on those days permitted by the rubrics.

8. Both the living and the dead partake of the graces bestowed in the Mass, but if the Mass is for the dead, the departed receive the more special fruit, no matter whether it be said in black or the color of the day. A Requiem, however, should more forcibly remind priest and people of the Poor Souls, and incite them to pray ardently for their repose.

9. In Masses for the Dead everything pertaining to joy is omitted; also any allusion to the general fruit of the Mass which those present receive, so that the attention may be directed entirely to the souls departed. It is true that the Faithful receive the general fruits of these Masses, as well as from any other Mass, but by the sad mourning ritual they are incited to think more of the departed than of themselves.

The psalm "Judica me" is omitted, because of the words: "Judge me O Lord and why art thou sad O my soul?" The soul for which we pray has already been judged at the secret tribunal of God, and why should we ask the cause of its sadness, when perhaps it is exiled from Him Whom it loves?

The Gloria Patri, the Gloria in excelsis, the Alleluia, and the Ite missa est, are not heard in Masses for the Dead, because the souls in Purgatory are not yet allowed to join in the canticles of the angels.

The sign of the Cross at the Introit is made by the priest with his hand toward the Missal, not over himself. Does he bless the altar or the book? No. Why then this blessing? The souls who have been recommended to him are in the mind and heart of the priest. His one desire is to comfort them, and to show this desire as soon as he goes up to the altar he applies to them the blessed fruits of the Cross; he knows how to despoil himself generously in their favor. At the end of the Gospel the book is not kissed, to signify that the souls of the dead have not yet received the ineffable kiss of God; or, again, because having died in the sign of faith there is no need for them to profess their belief in the Gospel. The Creed is omitted for the same reason. At the Offertory the priest again does not bless the water poured into the chalice; water is a symbol of the Faithful in the Mass, but in Masses for the Dead it represents more particularly the souls in Purgatory, and the Church in not blessing the water wishes to show that she has no jurisdiction over those souls.

The omission of the blessing at the close of Mass is also an act of charity on the part of the priest and people, who seem to forget themselves and to think only of those who suffer—the poor exiles from heaven, for whom are all the merits, all the blessings, all

the fruits of the sacrifice. At the Agnus Dei the "Miserere nobis" (Have mercy on us) is replaced by the words: Dona eis requiem (Give them rest). In Masses for the Dead it is always *them* and never *us*. At solemn High Mass of Requiem incense is used at the Offertory, and then only to incense the Sacrifice, the altar and the priest, then again at the Elevation. The grand awe-inspiring Sequence—"Dies irae," which follows the Gradual (after the Epistle), is also prayed in solemn Masses for the Dead; in private Masses, however, the recitation of this hymn is optional with the priest. The essential parts of the Mass are not changed in Masses for the Dead. The three principal parts and the entire Canon remain the same, excepting the non-essential parts above mentioned. It is one and the same stream of love which flows continually in the Holy Sacrifice, for the dead as well as for the living.

*The Dies irae, conceded to be one of the grandest hymns ever written, has been claimed by many authors; but the one who seems to have the strongest claim is Latino Orsini, commonly called Frangipani, raised to the Cardinalate by his maternal uncle, Pope Nicholas III., in 1278. He was known as Cardinal Malabranca, and was at first a member of the Dominican Order. After Cardinal Orsini, the claims to it, on the part of Thomas de Celano, of the Order of Franciscans Minor, are the greatest. According to Schaff, this marvelous hymn is the masterpiece of Latin poetry, and the most sublime of all inspired hymns.

THE SACRAMENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The Holy Sacraments are the channels by which the merits of the Sacrifice of the Cross flow to us. As the Mass is a continuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross, so it is also the central point of the Sacraments.

2. The Catholic Church has at all times taught and administered seven Sacraments, because she received this number from Christ through the Apostles, and because seven correspond to all the spiritual wants of man.

3. The outward signs which we see in the dispensing of the Sacraments have been established partly by Christ and partly by the Church. The signs established by Christ are absolutely necessary for the validity of the Sacrament; they are the form and matter of the Sacrament. The signs established by the Church are not essentially necessary, but by them the sublimity of these mysteries become more intuitively evident, as they have great influence on the heart of man, making it, thereby, more susceptible to the workings of grace, which flow from the Sacraments.

By the matter of a Sacrament we understand the act by which the Sacrament is administered, e. g., the pouring of water in Baptism; by the form we understand the words which must be spoken, as in

Baptism the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father," etc.

4. The Sacraments are divided into the Sacraments of the Dead, and the Sacraments of the Living. Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the Dead because they give sanctifying grace to the soul, and have the power of raising the soul from the death of sin to the life of grace. The other five Sacraments are called Sacraments of the Living, because those who receive them worthily must be in a state of grace; they increase sanctifying grace in those who receive them.

The Sacraments are again divided into those that can be received but once, as Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders; and Sacraments that can be received oftener, namely, the other four.

Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders can be received but once, because they imprint on the soul an indelible character, which always remains. In Baptism man becomes a citizen of the kingdom of God on earth; in Confirmation, a soldier, and in Holy Orders, an officer of this kingdom. Each of these three honors leaves an indelible seal on the soul of those who receive them, therefore the graces of these three Sacraments can be renewed every moment.

5. The administration of the Sacraments was confided by Christ to the priesthood of His Church. As the Holy Mysteries upon which Christ has made the salvation of the soul depend must be sacredly ad-

ministered, He established the priesthood and entrusted it with the administration of the Sacraments. Baptism alone may, in case of necessity, be administered by any one, even by a heretic or Jew, if he use the proper matter and form; even if no necessity existed, Baptism so given would be valid, although unlawful. Confirmation and Holy Orders are administered by the bishop; the other Sacraments by the priest.

The faithful should endeavor to learn the significance of the ceremonies used in administering the Sacraments; this will increase veneration for these Holy Mysteries and help to prepare us for their worthy reception.

BAPTISM.

1. The outward signs established by Christ and necessary for the validity of the Sacrament of Baptism, consist in pouring water three times in the form of a cross on the head of the person to be baptized, saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

2. The matter of Baptism is the pouring of water. Usually only water that was blessed on Holy Saturday or the vigil of Pentecost should be used. It is permitted to use Holy Water in case of private Baptism, if it is at hand; if not, then any natural un-adulterated water may be used.

3. Christ appointed water for Baptism because:

(1) Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation, and water may be obtained everywhere.

(2) Water denotes most distinctly the effects of Baptism; as water cleanses the body, so Baptism cleanses the soul from sin.

(3) Water cools and refreshes the body, so Baptism cools the glow of evil desires and renews the inner man.

4. The form consists in the words: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father † and of the Son † and of the Holy † Ghost." These words must be pronounced entire and unchanged by the person baptizing while pouring the water. If there be a doubt as to whether the candidate for Baptism is still alive, or may not have been already baptized, then the words: "If you still live," or "if you have not already been baptized," "I baptize thee," etc., must be added.

5. The minister of Baptism is the priest, except in case of necessity, as before stated; when any person may baptize; but he must have the intention of doing what Christ ordained.

6. It is an old-established custom of the Church to have sponsors; they act, first, as witnesses, who can testify to the fact that the person has received the Sacrament of Baptism; secondly, as security that the candidate for Baptism will remain true to the faith. Therefore when the one to be baptized cannot

speak, the sponsors must reply to the questions, and recite the baptismal vows. Sponsors should also provide for the Christian instruction of their godchildren, if the parents should neglect this duty, or if they should be removed by death. Thus a spiritual affinity is contracted between the sponsors and godchild, as well as his natural parents, which the Church regards as an impediment to marriage; hence the number of godparents is limited to two. One sponsor is indispensably necessary.

7. In order to fulfill the duties of godparents the sponsors must have the following qualities:

(1) The sponsor, if there be but one, must be of the same sex as the godchild.

(2) He should be an adult and have been confirmed.

(3) He should be well instructed in his faith, and lead a virtuous life.

On the other hand the following persons cannot be sponsors: the parents of the one to be baptized, non-Catholics, the excommunicated, persons of ill repute, or those ignorant of the truths of their religion, nor members of Religious Orders. These cannot fulfill the duties of sponsor. All sponsors should seriously consider their obligations and perform them conscientiously.

8. In the first Christian centuries when mostly adults were solemnly baptized, the vigils of Easter and Pentecost were set apart for the reception of

Baptism, because man, through Baptism, rises to a new spiritual life and becomes the temple of the Holy Ghost. Nowadays as mostly infants are baptized, they should be baptized as soon as possible after birth, because the newly born hover between life and death. In remembrance of the early solemn Baptism at Easter and Pentecost, baptismal water is still blessed on the vigils of these feasts.

9. The Sacrament of Baptism is to be administered in the Church. In former times the so-called baptistries, or small chapels, were used for this purpose. Instead of these we have now the baptismal fonts. Only in case of necessity is it allowed to baptize in private houses. Nearly all the Sacraments are administered in the Church, therefore it is but proper that the first Sacrament should be administered there.

BAPTISMAL RITE.

1. The Baptismal Rite consists of three parts:

(1) The ceremonies at the Church door, which represent to us the liberation of the candidate from the slavery of sin and Satan.

(2) The ceremonies from the entrance into the church to the Baptism, which form the approximate preparation and the Baptism itself.

(3) The ceremonies after Baptism; these are to remind the baptized that he should faithfully preserve the graces bestowed in Baptism until death; these graces exert a sacred power, and enable the baptized to fulfill the duties involved.

2. The priest vested in violet stole meets the child at the church door, because it is still a child of wrath and has not yet the right to enter into the house of the children of God. Baptism is the door to the threefold sanctuary of grace, the Church and of heaven.

3. The name of a Saint is given to the child. This custom originated in the first Christian centuries and has a beautiful significance.

It indicates that the person baptized has been made a child of God, and incorporated into the company of the Saints. The Christian should recall his baptismal vow, as often as he hears his name. This name is also a mark of honor and of grace. In the Sacred Scripture the giving of a name was always a mark of special grace or gift, so also man, through Baptism, is raised to the dignity of a Christian—becomes a sacerdotal king.

By the baptismal name the child receives a special patron, a powerful intercessor in heaven, and a model for imitation. The Christian should daily implore the protection of his patron saint, and as often as he hears his name he should remember that he is in communion with the saints in heaven, where, one day, he will also be united with them forever.

4. The priest then addresses some questions to the one to be baptized, or to his sponsors, on faith, etc. This is in remembrance of the religious instruction which formerly preceded Baptism. He breathes upon him three times. God breathed the breath of

life into Adam. Through Baptism sin is expelled from the soul and supernatural life is received. Christ imparted the Holy Ghost to His Disciples by breathing upon them. In like manner, by Baptism, man becomes the temple of God.

5. The priest then makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead and breast of the candidate, as a sign, that will, and understanding must first be blessed, and made subject to the doctrine of the Cross, if man would become and remain a temple of God. Do not be ashamed of the Cross which you have borne on your forehead since your Baptism.

6. The priest lays his hand upon the one baptized, to show that he is now placed under the powerful protection of the Holy Ghost.

7. Finally, salt is placed on his lips, to denote preservation from the temptation of sin. Salt preserves from corruption, gives a savory taste to food, and is a symbol of wisdom. In like manner, man is freed from the corruption of sin by Baptism, receives a relish for good works and is inspired with a desire for the wisdom of the Cross. The priest previously blesses the salt, imploring for the one to be baptized all the graces symbolized by the salt.

8. The priest now solemnly exorcises the child; this is a renunciation of Satan. According to Leo the Great, this exorcism was established by the Apostles. It is a powerful command in the name

of God for Satan to depart, that the Holy Ghost may dwell in this soul. At the close of the exorcism, the priest makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead of the child, a shield, as it were, against the infernal powers.

9. Laying the stole upon the child he leads him into the temple of God. Priest and sponsors at the same time repeat aloud the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father. The stole is a sign of the power of the Church, by which the priest grants the child permission to enter the Church, after having been liberated from the kingdom of Satan. The Apostles' Creed and the Our Father are prayed here in commemoration of the Catechumens, who in early Christian times were permitted to learn the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father, only after they had been prepared for Baptism. As the Church is a house of prayer, we should always enter it with sentiments of faith and devotion.

10. The ceremonies at the baptismal font form the immediate preparation for Baptism; they begin with the second exorcism.

This exorcism is to free the person forever from the power of Satan. The priest, here, anoints the nostrils and ears with spittle. As Christ restored sight to the blind, and made the dumb to speak, touching with spittle, so shall the external senses be withdrawn from the power of Satan, and opened for the service of God.

11. Then follows the abjuration, which in the first Christian centuries was very solemnly performed. By the ceremonies and prayers preceding this act of exorcism, the Church liberated the candidate from the slavery of Satan, but now he must solemnly renounce the Prince of Darkness himself, and therefore renounces Satan, all his works and all his pomps. By this abjuration the person frees himself not only from the Spirit of Darkness, but also enters into a covenant that he will fight against him to guard himself from his wiles.

12. To make him a soldier of Christ, he is anointed on the breast and shoulders with the Oil of the Catechumens. Anointing on the breast denotes the interior combat, because the breast or heart is the seat of evil desires; between the shoulders denotes the outward combat.

13. The priest now exchanges the violet stole for a white one. So far, the object of all the ceremonies and prayers was the expulsion of Satan and the extermination of sin; therefore the penitential color was used. The ceremonies following and the prayers show the state of innocence, joy, and justice which are accomplished by Baptism; therefore white, the color of joy and innocence, is used.

14. The priest then addresses three questions on faith in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Faith and Baptism must, according to the words of Christ, be united, at least with an adult. Faith in the three Divine Persons must be confessed,

because this mystery of the Holy Trinity includes the foundation and summary of Christian faith.

This confession of faith forms with the preceding abjuration the baptismal covenant, or vow. In this covenant the person renounces sin, and promises God to remain true to the living faith. On the other hand God grants him forgiveness of all sin, His grace upon earth and eternal happiness in heaven. The Christian should bear this covenant in mind, and often renew his baptismal vows.

15. As man is to receive Baptism of his own free will and not by compulsion, the priest asks: "Wilt thou be baptised?"

16. Then follows the Baptism itself, which is administered either by a triple immersion, pouring or sprinkling of water. In the early ages of the Church, Baptism was administered by immersion, in special chapels, or so-called baptistries. In the Western Church, the rule now is to baptize by pouring water three times in the form of a cross, while pronouncing the words: I baptize thee, "N," in the name of the Father † and of the Son † and of the Holy † Ghost. The sign of the Cross is used because Baptism has its efficacy from the death of Jesus on the Cross. Baptism by sprinkling is only permitted in case of necessity.

17. After Baptism the top of the head is anointed with chrism in the form of a cross, for the following reasons:

(1) Anointing denotes strength, and here signifies the power of the Holy Ghost, who has imparted the baptismal graces.

(2) Kings and priests are anointed. Therefore this anointing denotes the majesty of the name Christian and its divine calling, for the one baptized partakes of the royal and sacerdotal dignity of Christ; he should rule over all the inclinations of his heart, and daily offer sacrifice to God by prayer, mortification, etc.

(3) Churches, altars, chalices, etc., are also anointed at their consecration. In like manner the Christian by baptism becomes the temple of God the Holy Ghost, and a vessel for the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The head is anointed to denote the consecration and coronation of the Christian. The priest then says: "Peace be with thee." Baptism brought peace into the heart, and it will remain there so long as the baptismal grace is preserved.

18. A white dress or cloth is placed on the baptized, to denote the innocence and purity which the Christian has received in Baptism; it is the wedding garment which he should bring unsullied to the judgment seat of God. Venial sin sullies this dress; mortal sin rends it asunder.

19. A burning candle is then placed in his hand or that of his sponsor, to signify that he is now free from the darkness of sin, and lives in the light of grace.

The burning candle is, furthermore, a symbol of the three Theological virtues which in Baptism are infused into the soul, for light is an emblem of faith; the flame signifies hope, and the consuming fire, love. The candle is held, to signify that he should shine before men, by his virtues and good works.

Finally, the burning candle should remind us of the lighted lamp, with which the Christian, like the wise Virgins, should be prepared to meet the Divine Bridegroom.

Only when he has carefully preserved this light through life will he be prepared to die consoled, with the blessed candle in his hand.

20. The priest finally dismisses the one baptized with the words: "Go in peace and the Lord be with thee." This is the sacred wish of the Church, that the baptized may faithfully preserve that peace which he received in Baptism and remain in union with the Lord.

21. Most of these ceremonies are from the first centuries of Christianity, as the testimony of the Fathers go to show. Thank God daily for the priceless grace of Baptism, frequently renew your baptismal vows, every Sunday and especially on the anniversary of your baptism. Treasure your baptismal innocence as the most precious gift on earth.

CONFIRMATION IN GENERAL.

1. The word Confirmation comes from the Latin and means to strengthen, because by this Sacrament the soul is strengthened by the Holy Ghost in the profession of the faith, and in the practice of all Christian virtues.

The difference between Baptism and Confirmation is, that the Holy Ghost is given us in Baptism to free us from sin; in Confirmation to perfect us in virtue; the sacrament of Baptism makes us Christians; Confirmation makes us perfect Christians; by Baptism we are made children of God, by Confirmation we are made soldiers of Jesus Christ. Finally, in Baptism we are purified, in Confirmation we are armed.

2. The visible signs of this Sacrament instituted by Christ are: the imposition of hands, and the anointing of the forehead with Chrism. This forms the matter of the Sacrament as expressed in the words spoken while anointing: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the Chrism of Salvation, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen."

3. The ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop, because, as Holy Scripture testifies, the Apostles administered this sacrament. In extraordinary cases the Pope may empower priests to administer Confirmation, as sometimes occurs in missionary heathen countries.

4. The sacrament of Confirmation may be validly received by all who have been baptized; except in case of necessity, children who have not attained the age of reason, or who have not been sufficiently instructed at least in the most important articles of faith should not be confirmed.

5. The person to be confirmed has a sponsor, who not only presents him to the bishop but should also assist him in faithfully practicing the graces conferred in Confirmation. He should see that his godchild is well grounded in the faith, and lives up to its teachings; he should, furthermore, by his own example guide him in the path of virtue, and assist him by word and deed against the assaults of the enemy.

The sponsor should possess the following qualities:

(1) He should be old enough to fulfill the duties of sponsor.

(2) Of the same sex.

(3) He should have been confirmed, and well instructed in the faith.

(4) The sponsor in Confirmation should be different from the one in Baptism. Parents or Religious cannot be sponsors. Neither can criminals, infidels or the excommunicated, because all these cannot fulfill their duties as sponsor. The sponsors in Confirmation, contract, like the sponsors in Baptism, a spiritual affinity with the godchild and its parents.

In some dioceses, however, it is customary to have only one or two persons act as sponsors for a whole class, a man for the male, and a woman for the female parties.

6. It is usual for the person receiving Confirmation to take a new name, which ought to be the name of some saint, whose virtuous example he should strive to imitate. He has, thereby, a new intercessor in heaven and a new model in the spiritual combat on earth.

CEREMONIAL OF CONFIRMATION.

1. Since the Sacrament of Confirmation should be received only in the state of grace, the person to be confirmed must previously go to Confession and receive Holy Communion, or at least have made a good Confession. If possible, he should also assist at Mass, and awaken a great desire for the coming of the Holy Ghost.

When Confirmation begins, all should kneel, like the Apostles, to await in humility and prayer, the coming of the Divine Spirit.

2. The bishop prays for the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, while extending his hands over those who are about to be confirmed, to signify that the Holy Ghost takes them under His protection, and is about to replenish them with His graces.

3. Then each one is presented to the bishop who anoints him on the forehead with Chrism in the

form of a cross, while saying the words : I confirm thee with the Chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. Then he gives him a stroke on the cheek, saying : Peace be with thee. During the ceremonies the sponsor stands behind the one to be confirmed and puts the right hand on the one being confirmed.

When all have been confirmed they should kneel down ; while the bishop says the final prayer and gives them his blessing, before which no one should leave the church.

4. The Chrism, blessed annually by the bishop on Holy Thursday, consists of olive oil and balsam. Oil penetrates the body, so the Holy Ghost penetrates the soul ; it heals wounds, so Confirmation effaces venial sin. It also strengthens ; the athletes of old rubbed their limbs with oil to strengthen them for the combat ; in like manner Confirmation strengthens the Christian to combat for Christ. Oil softens and mitigates, and is an emblem of charity, which the Holy Ghost increases in the soul.

Fragrant balm is mixed with the oil to signify, that he who is confirmed, receives the grace to preserve himself from the corruption of the world, and to send forth by a pious life the sweet odor of virtue. 2 Cor. II 15.

5. The bishop makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead, not alone because all Sacraments are min-

istered in this form, but especially because the Cross is the insignia of the Christian, the distinguishing mark which characterizes the soldier of Christ.

6. The Cross is made upon the forehead because the forehead is always open to view, and he should always be ready to profess his faith openly before the whole world; as the Apostles did on Pentecost.

7. The stroke on the cheek confers as it were, knighthood upon the young Christian, whereby he is enrolled in the grand army of the Heavenly King, and from now on is a soldier of Christ. He must be ready to suffer persecution and contempt for Jesus' sake.

The bishop gives the stroke on the cheek while saying: "Peace be with thee," thereby expressing that the Spirit of Peace has taken His dwelling in your heart. Never drive Him from you by sin. If you battle bravely, and suffer patiently, He will always remain with you.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

The Holy Eucharist may be considered in the threefold relation of Sacrifice, Holy Communion and the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Sacrifice of the Mass has been already explained; the explanation of the other parts is as follows:

HOLY COMMUNION.

1. In the first Christian centuries the faithful usually received Holy Communion during Mass, after the communion of the priest. The sick and prisoners, however, were allowed to receive out of Mass. Men received the Holy Sacrament in the hollow of the right hand, supporting it with the left in the form of a cross, and in this manner conveyed it to the mouth. The women did the same, but on the right hand was spread a small white cloth made specially for this purpose, on which the Sacred Host was laid. However, since the middle of the sixth century it is customary to receive Holy Communion on the tongue. The Sacred Blood, which in the first centuries of Christianity was also given to the laity, was administered by means of a tube, and often out of the chalice itself.

2. It was the custom, in early times, to communicate daily, but as love of God gradually waxed cold, the faithful went less frequently to Holy Communion. Although the Christians in the fourth century communicated at least once a week, in the thirteenth century, 1215, the Church was compelled to enforce the command that all the faithful were to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, and that about Eastertime. This command is still in force. Although this is the extreme limit which the Church allows, the zealous Christian, however, will not be content with this practice alone; but according to the

example of the first Christians will endeavor to communicate often, at least once a month.

3. Since the Christian in Holy Communion receives into his heart the greatest gift of God, yea, even the Dispenser of all graces, he is bound to receive this Sacrament only after careful preparation. He should prepare both body and soul for a worthy reception of Holy Communion. His soul should be in the state of sanctifying grace or at least he should have made a good confession. To receive Holy Communion when one is conscious of having committed a mortal sin, is to incur the guilt of sacrilege. We should endeavor to purify ourselves from every venial sin, and even from every attachment to sin. Although venial sin does not make our Communion unworthy, it hinders the workings of grace. We should, furthermore, prepare for Holy Communion by prayer, acts of self-denial, works of mercy, and awaken acts of faith, hope, humility and love. The better the preparation, the greater the plenitude of graces.

Our body must be prepared by fasting from midnight. This command originated in the early days of Christianity, and is to be strictly observed. No person is allowed to receive Holy Communion and no priest is permitted to say Mass, after having partaken of food whether solid or liquid, no matter how little it may have been. Only those who are in danger of death may receive Holy Communion after having partaken of food, but even those

who are sick and *not* in danger of death, must communicate fasting.

This command is out of respect to the Body of our Lord. Fasting also increases devotion, and adds materially to the preparation for Communion.

Our dress should be clean and suited to our station. We should, if possible, wear better garments than those in daily use, and be modestly dressed. Pope Innocent XI in 1683, expressly forbade Communion to be given to women immodestly dressed.

4. Thanksgiving after Communion is also of great importance. As soon as we have received our Lord, we should occupy ourselves exclusively with this Heavenly Guest, in order to show him our love, and to lay before Him all of our own wants and necessities, as well as the wants of our Holy Church, and our family. Our thanksgiving should last at least a quarter of an hour, for so long, at least, our Lord remains in His humanity within us. If obliged to expectorate we should never eject the saliva on the ground; but, if it cannot be avoided altogether, we should use the handkerchief.

5. Holy Communion produces in a soul well prepared, wonderful gifts of grace. (1) It sustains the spiritual life, it preserves the soul from the spiritual death of sin, and endows it with strength to resist the temptations of the Evil One; (2) it increases sanctifying grace, filling the soul with a holy

joy and longing, and promotes the virtues, especially charity and purity. (3) Furthermore, it leads the spiritual life to perfection, and the soul by her intimate union with Christ attains the most intimate communion with the Church Militant, Suffering and Triumphant; her glory in heaven is more assured and increased; even the body which now participates in the graces of the soul, is more and more sanctified by the Body of our Lord and will one day partake of the eternal glory of the soul. We should therefore go frequently, and well prepared to Holy Communion.

6. The Ritual for Holy Communion is essentially the same, whether it be administered during Mass or out of Mass. It is always considered as belonging to the Mass, therefore the priest when giving Communion always wears a stole the same color as the vestment of the day. The Council of Trent expressed the wish, that Holy Communion should be connected, as much as possible, with the Sacrifice of the Mass. The following is the rite:

(1) The server says the Confiteor, while the priest takes the ciborium out of the tabernacle and uncovers it. Then the priest says two prayers, a form of absolution. The Church would admonish us thereby, that no one should approach the table of the Lord unworthily, but should prove and purify himself. It was formerly a prescribed custom that the people should on the day of Communion, wash hands and feet and appear in finer garments at the

table of the Lord. We should communicate with the greatest veneration and the purest of hearts, therefore the Confiteor is recited and absolution, again given.

The two prayers which the priest says over the communicants after the Confiteor contain not a real sacramental absolution such as is given in the Sacrament of Penance, but it is a blessing of the Church, a Sacramental, which purifies contrite hearts from venial sin. These prayers are said in the plural, even if only one were to communicate; because they apply as well to all present who communicate spiritually, since they also partake of the graces dispensed in the Sacrament.

(2) The priest raises a Host above the ciborium, showing it to the people with the words once used by John the Baptist calling his disciples: "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the World." By these words, our hearts should be moved to make an act of lively faith in the real presence of Christ under the form of bread.

(3) He then repeats three times the words of the Centurion of Capharnaum: "O Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, speak only the word and my soul shall be healed." These words repeated three times by the priest should admonish us to make acts of faith, hope, charity and humility, and we should be entirely penetrated with these sentiments.

(4) In administering Holy Communion, the priest makes the sign of the Cross with the Sacred Host over each communicant while saying the words: "The body of our Lord, Jesus Christ, preserve thy soul unto life everlasting, Amen." The sign of the Cross denotes that all the Sacraments receive their efficacy from the death of Jesus on the Cross.

(5) When Holy Communion is given out of the Mass, the priest again gives the blessing at the close, that the Holy Communion may produce the greatest possible fruit in our souls. No further ceremony is used, so that the faithful may not be detained from immediate intercourse with their loving Redeemer who now dwells within their hearts. Would to God that every one would make use of these precious moments of grace. "How much those lose," exclaims St. Alphonsus, "who neglect to implore graces after receiving Holy Communion."

7. The Rubrics for administering Holy Communion as Viaticum differ somewhat from those to be observed under ordinary circumstances. First of all, the person need not be fasting, again, the priest uses the form: "Receive brother (sister) the Viaticum of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will protect you from the Evil One and lead you to life everlasting." From these words we see that the purpose of the Viaticum is to strengthen the dying in his conflict with the spirits of darkness, and

to facilitate his entrance into heaven. Any one dangerously sick should not delay to receive the Last Sacraments; he will thereby the more easily regain his health, or be the better prepared to die.

8. The zealous Christian will often communicate spiritually, by awakening within his heart an ardent desire to be intimately united with Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. It is not difficult to make a Spiritual Communion; we should recollect ourselves for a few moments, place ourselves in spirit before the tabernacle, make an act of contrition and consider how ardently Christ desires to bestow the treasure of His love upon us, then say "Lord Jesus, come I beseech Thee, into my heart"; finally thank Him and implore new graces.

We may communicate spiritually every hour of the day, more particularly during Mass or when passing by a church. As we take corporal food three times a day, so do many Christians receive Communion spiritually three times a day or even oftener.

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

1. Out of love for Jesus, every Christian should endeavor to visit Him in the mystery of His love as often as possible, and before the tabernacle renew his faith, inflame his love, and adore his God in union with the Angels, who invisibly hover around the altar. He should ponder on some incident in the

life or sufferings of our Lord; place his own wants and those of others before Him, make good resolutions, communicate spiritually, and recommend himself to the Blessed Virgin. "Visits to the Blessed Sacrament" by Alphonsus Ligouri may be very appropriately used on such occasions.

2. To render proper adoration and veneration to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, confraternities of Perpetual Adoration have been established for over two hundred years.

Tabernacle societies have also been established in our time, which besides visiting the Blessed Sacrament, make it a rule to furnish poor churches with a proper habitation for the Blessed Sacrament, by providing altar furnishings, etc.

3. The Forty Hours' Adoration is a special devotion in atonement for all the insults offered to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. It was introduced about the middle of the XVI Century, in commemoration of the forty hours during which the sacred body of Jesus lay in the sepulchre, from His death to His resurrection, and through this union of prayers to avert some calamity. St. Philip Neri was the most zealous promoter of this devotion.

In the middle of the XVIII century, Popes Benedict XIV and Clement XIII, ordained that the Forty Hours' Adoration should be held throughout the entire Catholic world on the so-called Carnival

days, in expiation of the sins committed on those days. For this purpose the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for adoration forty hours, on three successive days, the Adoration being closed with procession and solemn Benediction. By a rescript dated Dec. 10, 1857, Pope Pius IX granted, among other modifications, the omission of the procession even inside the church if it cannot be properly held. Whosoever on these three days participates in the Adoration and receives the Sacraments can obtain a plenary indulgence, which may be applied to the souls in Purgatory (Benedict XIV, January, 1748).

4. In olden times exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was not known. Even as late as the XIV century the faithful could see the Sacred Host only at the Consecration and at Communion. Just as little was Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament given. It is only since the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi that the Blessed Sacrament was more frequently exposed for public veneration. The more the love for Jesus waxed cold, the more He revealed His love for man to draw him to Himself. The Church prescribes that the altar on which the Exposition takes place, must be ornamented in festal array, adorned with flowers and illuminated with many candles. Faithful worshipers should never be wanting; they are the richest ornament of the Lord. At the close of the Exposition, just before Benediction, the last two verses of the "Pange Lingua" are either prayed or sung. During the

last verse or after it, the priest incenses the Blessed Sacrament, then, sings or prays the versicle and the oration of the Blessed Sacrament. Putting on the benediction veil he ascends the altar and gives the Benediction in solemn stillness, in the form of a cross. The incense which envelopes the altar as with a cloud, admonishes the faithful to be devout and reverent, in order to obtain the blessings bestowed by the Blessed Sacrament. The priest takes hold of the monstrance with his hands covered by the benediction veil, that he may not touch it with bare hands, thereby denoting his humility and respect. This solemn Benediction is an awe inspiring moment in Catholic worship; a rich stream of grace and mercy flows from the Blessed Sacrament into the hearts of the worshipers, but only in proportion to the purity and susceptibility of their souls.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

1. The Sacrament of Penance was given us by Christ in order to obtain remission of sins committed after Baptism; whoever receives this Sacrament frequently, will find an excellent means of rooting out sin and implanting virtue in the heart. In the first centuries of the Church a private and a public confession was customary. When the Christian had confessed his sins privately, the priest could oblige him to make a public confession of some of his sins; but only such as were publicly committed. By

this public confession he was to do penance and repair the scandal given. Secret hidden sins dare not be publicly confessed. In the course of time, public penance was abolished and public confession also ceased.

2. The visible sign established by Christ, which constitutes the matter of the Sacrament of Penance, is the contrite confession of sins, and the absolution pronounced by the priest, is the form.

3. The effects of this Sacrament are very consoling. (1) All sins, without exception, can be forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance, if the penitent is heartily sorry and makes a good confession. (2) The eternal punishment due to sin is remitted, and the temporal in part. The greater the penitent's sorrow, and his desire to do penance, the more readily will the temporal punishment due to sin be remitted. (3) Sanctifying grace which has been lost by mortal sin returns to the soul, and all the merits of good works performed previous to committing mortal sin revive again. He who has only venial sins to confess receives an increase of sanctifying grace in the Sacrament of Penance. (4) The grace of assistance is also received in Confession; the penitent receives strength to overcome temptation and to continue in the practice of virtue.

4. But to experience these effects, the penitent must prepare himself properly, so that he may go to confession with befitting sentiments of contrition and make a good confession. He should therefore

first implore the assistance of the Holy Ghost, sincerely examine his conscience, and especially excite in his heart true contrition for his sins; make a firm resolution of amendment, and avoid the occasions of sin for the future. Then go to confession and candidly confess his sins without reserve, obey the instructions of the priest and faithfully perform the penance imposed.

RITE OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

1. In administering the Sacrament of Penance, the priest is vested with a surplice and purple stole, to remind the faithful that he is the ambassador of God, endowed with supernatural power to dispense this Sacrament. The priests sits, to show his judicial authority. The violet color denotes the penitential spirit, without which no remission of sin is possible.

2. The priest receives the penitent on his entrance into the confessional with the benediction: "May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips, that thou mayest truly and humbly confess thy sins in the name of the Father and † of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." The priest prays thereby, that the penitent may have the grace to make a good and contrite confession. This is a short summary of the prayers, which the priest formerly prayed before confession for the penitent. He makes the sign of the Cross at the same time over the penitent, who also blesses himself. This sign here has besides the

general significance of a blessing, also the special meaning, that the forgiveness of sin can only be obtained through the merits of Jesus Crucified.

3. The penitent then confesses his sins kneeling, for this is the posture proper for an humble contrite sinner. Then he listens attentively to the advice and instruction of the priest, answers his questions humbly and candidly, is careful to notice the penance, then makes an act of contrition while the priest gives the absolution.

4. The absolution itself consists of three parts:

(1) The usual absolution, the same as the priest prays before giving Communion to the Faithful, but while he there uses the plural, here he uses the singular number, "May the Almighty God have mercy on thee, forgive thee thy sins, and bring thee to life everlasting, Amen."

"May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant thee pardon, absolution and remission of thy sins, Amen."

(2) Then follows the remission of the canonical censure.

May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee, and I, in His stead, release thee from all ban of excommunication and interdict, so far as I may, and so far as required by thee.

(3) Then finally the Absolution proper, "I absolve thee from thy sins in the name † of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen."

5. This formula of absolution is a summary of the ancient practice customary in the early Church. As at that time a double confession was customary (a secret and an open confession) so a double absolution was in use. After a secret confession, absolution was given with the imposition of hands; the penitent received thereby, remission of his sins and was readmitted into communion with God. After public confession, canonical penance was imposed to atone for the temporal punishment due to sin. After the public penance had been performed, a form of absolution was again given, by which the penitent was freed from all sin and punishment of sin, and once more received into full communion with the Church. This act was called reconciliation.

When public confession and canonical penance ceased, these two kinds of absolution were epitomized into the form now in use.

The first part, the absolution, reminds us of that absolution given after secret confession. As the priest then placed his hands on the penitent so the confessor now raises his right hand as a sign that he has power, as God's representative, to remit sin.

The second part, the remission of the canonical censure, is a reminder of the second absolution or reconciliation, after the public penance had been performed. It is now more of a reconciliation and reunion with the Church, and is imparted before the absolution proper. The penitent enters at once into

the full enjoyment of all the means of grace in the Church; the remission of temporal punishment due to sin is left to his own zeal in making use of the treasure of indulgences.

The third part contains the absolution proper, by which the efficacy of the Sacrament, the forgiveness of sin takes place.

6. After the absolution, the priest says a special prayer, asking that the penitent now freed from sin by the Passion of Christ, through the merits of the Blessed Virgin, by his own good works and sufferings, may obtain remission of temporal punishment, an increase of grace, and a special reward in Heaven.

By an indulgence is meant the remission of the *temporal punishment* due to us on account of our sins. Every sin, however grievous, is remitted through the Sacrament of Penance, or by an act of perfect contrition, as regards its *guilt* and the *eternal punishment* due to it. But the debt of *temporal* punishment is not always remitted at the same time. This latter is done away with by deep penitence, or by works of satisfaction, e. g. prayers, alms, fasting, etc.

To gain an indulgence it is necessary to be in a state of grace, otherwise good works can only conduce to the conversion of him who performs them, and are valueless for the remission of temporal punishment.

The Church grants indulgences for the recital of certain prayers, for visiting certain holy places, for the use of certain sacred things, besides personal indulgences.

An indulgence is either plenary, when a full and entire remission of *all* temporal punishment due to sin is gained, or partial, when only a *portion* of the temporal punishment is remitted.

Plenary indulgences are granted by the Church, provided that we approach the sacraments and pray for the Holy Father's intention besides performing the prescribed works; sometimes the condition of visiting a church is added.

The most important plenary indulgences are the Jubilee indulgence, the indulgence of the Portiuncula, and that of the Papal benediction.

THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

1. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction was instituted by Christ chiefly for the spiritual strength and comfort of the dying. It is called Extreme Unction because it is the last unction or anointing of the Christian and because it is usually administered at the close of life.

2. The visible or outward sign of this Sacrament instituted by Christ is, as St. James the Apostle writes, anointing with oil, with the words: "Through this holy unction and through His most

tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever sins thou hast committed by thy sight, taste, hearing," etc. The anointing with Oil constitutes the matter of the Sacrament, while the words are the form.

3. The effects of Extreme Unction are: (1) An increase of sanctifying grace, (2) a cleansing of the soul from venial sin, and the remains of sin which were not remitted in Holy Communion, and the sacrament of Penance. The remains of sin may be mortal sins, venial sins, temporal punishment due to sin, the evil inclinations of the heart, and the weakness of the will, which are the just consequences of sins committed, and which may remain even after the sins have been forgiven. (3) It calms the mind, fills the heart with consolation, and renders the sick person resigned to the will of God. (4) It often relieves the pains of the sick person, and sometimes even restores health, if it be expedient for the salvation of the soul.

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick man and the Lord shall raise him up."

4. Since the effects of this Sacrament are so rich in graces, it should not be delayed too long; for, to partake of these graces in abundance, the sick person must do his part also. We must not expect the restoration of bodily health, if we put off the reception of this Sacrament until it can no longer sustain life without an apparent miracle.

5. We should prepare for this Sacrament by receiving the Sacraments of Penance, and Holy Communion received as Viaticum. We should awaken acts of faith, hope, humility, contrition, and resignation to the Divine will of God.

It is the duty of relatives, and of those who are in attendance upon the sick to see that they receive the Last Sacraments in due time. This responsibility rests partly with the doctor, who, as a matter of course, ought to apprise the friends of the sick person of his condition when it becomes serious. Catholics ought therefore to secure, if possible, the services of a Christian physician. Sometimes the attendants on a sick man fear to agitate him by mentioning the Last Sacraments to him. This is indeed mistaken kindness, for they cannot thereby retard the approach of death. Such false friends resemble people who would not warn a blind man if he were nearing a precipice, lest they should frighten him. Their cowardice will give them much to answer for. The friends of the sick person should see that the room is cleaned and set in order, the patient should be cleanly dressed, and those parts which are to be anointed should be washed, that is, if it can be done without danger.

A table should be placed near him covered with a clean white cloth; and upon it a Crucifix and two candles, or at least one, if possible, of wax, also a plate with some cotton, to wipe the unctions, some bread crumbs or salt, a vessel with water and a clean

cloth, further, a vessel with Holy Water. While the sick man makes his confession, all should leave the room as the priest may have to speak above a whisper.

5. Every Catholic who has come to the age of reason, and is in danger of death by sickness or from a wound or accident can, and ought to receive Extreme Unction. Those who cannot receive this Sacrament are the following:

(1) Persons who are in danger of death but not sick such as, soldiers in war, or criminals condemned to death.

(2) Children who have not attained the age of reason.

(3) Idiots who never have had the use of reason.

(4) Those who are under ban of excommunication, or public sinners who die without any sign of repentance.

7. The minister of this Sacrament is the priest, and certainly, also, the bishops; formerly several priests were called in to administer this Sacrament, and in the Greek Church even now the sick man is anointed by three priests. This is not, however, necessary for the validity of the sacrament; even in early times one priest alone, administered this Sacrament; and this is the general custom in the Roman Church to-day.

Every priest can validly administer this Sacrament, but except in case of necessity it should be administered by the parish priest.

Manner of administering this Sacrament:

1. On entering the house the priest says: "Peace be to this house." This is the salutation which the priest utters in the name of Christ. Into whatever house you enter, first say: "Peace be to this house" (Luke, 10.5). This salutation is to be imparted to the sick man, and to the whole house as well, by the administration of this Sacrament.

2. The priest presents the sick man a Crucifix to kiss, because he comes in the name of Jesus the Crucified who has purchased this peace for us.

3. Thereupon he sprinkles the sick person with holy water, the sick room and all present, in order to purify the hearts and, as far as possible, even the dwelling from sin, for peace will not abide where sin dwells. The sick person and those present should seek to cleanse their hearts by an act of contrition.

4. The three preparatory prayers which follow are likewise a blessing of the house and its inhabitants, from which it follows that the administration of Extreme Unction is salutary for the entire household, providing its efficacy is not frustrated by indifference and unbelief. The priest is here the mighty dispenser of blessings. Upon his entrance the Evil Spirits must depart and the Angels enter. By virtue of the power of the Holy Name the priest prays

that peace, health, and a spirit of devotion may be imparted to all present.

5. While the Confiteor is being said for the sick person by some one present, he should excite in his heart an act of contrition. Then the priest gives him absolution, as before Holy Communion, but in the singular. The same is done before administering the Viaticum. All of the prayers pertain to the welfare of the sick man.

6. Before anointing the sick person the priest admonishes those present to recite some prayers for him. The Penitential Psalms with litanies will be most appropriate. While the people are engaged in prayer he performs the unction. He anoints the sick man with Consecrated Oil in the form of a cross on the organs of sense, which have been instrumental to his sins (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands and feet). At each unction he repeats the following form of prayer: "Through this holy unction, † and through His most tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever sins thou hast committed by seeing, hearing," etc. If the sick person is actually expiring, the priest only anoints his forehead; but he continues to anoint the other parts, so long as life has not departed. In the Sacrament of Baptism, the senses are consecrated to the service of God; in Extreme Unction they are to be cleansed from the sins in which they participated, contrary to the object of their baptism. The sick person should have an ardent desire to be cleansed from sin.

Extreme Unction is for the health of the soul, and oftentimes for the body; it effects the remission of mortal sins which through infirmity of mind or body, he has not been able to confess, as well as the remission of some temporal punishment, and besides, bodily health when it is expedient for the welfare of the soul.

7. The prayers are followed by another blessing and the laying on of hands, placing the patient under the immediate protection of God, thereby obtaining consolation and strength for him in life and in death. The priest surrenders him to the Lord, as it were, by giving him the Crucifix to kiss and placing it before him. He then leaves the house in the same manner as he entered it, imparting a blessing.

GENERAL ABSOLUTION.

1. General Absolution is the Papal Benediction with a plenary indulgence for the dying. It is the blessing *in articulo mortis*—at the moment of death. It is therefore not a remission of sin. The remission of sin must precede General Absolution. The Church desires that the souls of her children should return to their Maker entirely cleansed.

In Baptism the Church remits sin and its eternal punishment, in Extreme Unction and General Absolution it also remits the temporal punishment due to sin. A dying person, who can and will make use of these three means of grace will go directly to heaven.

2. Even in the earliest Christian times, General Absolution was usually given to the dying; but the power to do so was more restrictive until Benedict XIV, 1747, decreed that all Bishops, upon request, should be empowered to give their respective clergy the faculties for administering General Absolution.

3. In order to obtain this indulgence the sick person must be—(1) in danger of death; (2) he must have an ardent desire to gain the indulgence; (3) he must have previously received the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist; (4) he must excite in his heart, acts of love and contrition; (5) he must be ready to accept death from the hand of God with resignation and invoke the name of Jesus either mentally or orally.

These conditions are necessary, as far as the patient is able to comply with them. Therefore General Absolution may be administered even to those who are unconscious, providing that they had previously desired it, or would have done so had they been conscious. It can only be received once in the same sickness, except when danger of death occurs again after previous recovery.

4. General Absolution is administered as follows:

(1) On entering the room the priest says, as in Extreme Unction, "Peace be to this house," and sprinkles the sick person, the room, and those present with Holy Water. He is to be cleansed still more from sin—even temporal punishment is to be remitted thereby.

(2) The priest begins in the name of the Lord, for only in this name is the remission of sin and its consequences, possible.

(3) The antiphon: "Remember not the offences of thy servant, O Lord, neither take vengeance of his sins," admonishes the sick man to receive General Absolution with a contrite and penitential spirit.

(4) Then the priest prays that the sick person may be purified from the stain of sin, through the merits of the life and death of our Redeemer.

(5) The Confiteor follows, and then absolution, as in the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

(6) The close is a prayer which contains the real General Absolution, or the Plenary Indulgence. In case of necessity this prayer alone is said over the dying.

5. The dying may also gain a Plenary Indulgence if they possess rosaries, crucifixes, medals, etc., to which indulgences for the dying are attached, and use them in the proper way; likewise if they belong to societies or Religious Orders entitled to these indulgences.

HOLY ORDERS.

1. Christ selected Apostles to place them over His church, and at His Last Supper conferred upon them the three-fold office of teacher, priest and shepherd. He also endowed them with the power of conferring this office upon others. The Apostles car-

ried out this command, and in the newly-formed congregations ordained deacons, priests and bishops. The bishops again conferred this power upon others, and so this Apostolic power has been transmitted in the Church, unbroken, for 1900 years.

The means of this transmission or propagation is the Sacrament of Holy Orders, by virtue of which the recipient is forever set apart, as it were, from the laity, to be empowered with this three-fold office.

2. As this exalted state of life should not be entered upon without careful preparation and examination, the Church has instituted several orders as degrees preceding the Sacerdotal dignity.

The first four of these degrees are called Minor Orders. They are: (1) The Doorkeeper; (2) Reader; (3) Exorcist; (4) Acolyte. The three others are called Major Orders. They are: (1) Sub-deacon; (2) Deacon, and (3) the Priesthood. The consummation and sum total of all the orders, is the Episcopacy.

3. The Minor Orders, it is true, were instituted by the Church, but in the earliest Christian times. In those dangerous days only reliable men were entrusted with the keys of the church door, the preparation for Divine Service, and other minor offices. Those who were chosen for these offices were ordained by prayer and outward ceremonies. The Minor Orders have not now this significance, but they serve as a preparation for Major Orders, which they must always precede.

The essential difference between the Minor and the Major Orders is, that the latter entitle an immediate participation in the Divine Service, and consecrate the receiver to the service of God forever; whereas the Minor Orders entitle the receiver only to inferior clerical services; neither do they bind the recipient forever to the clerical state, but always permit a return to the secular state.

4. These different Orders show us the greatness and exalted dignity of the priesthood, to which one ascends only by so many degrees; they place before our eyes, as a picture, the manifold duties of the priest, and none the less the plenitude of graces imparted to him.

5. The sacramental character of the priesthood is imprinted only by the last two degrees.

All the preceding Orders, although belonging to the Sacrament, are only a preparation for the complete reception of Holy Orders.

6. The outward signs for the last two degrees are the imposition of hands, by the Bishop, and the touching of the sacred vessels, which constitute the matter of the Sacrament; the necessary prayers constitute the form. The outward signs of the other degrees consist in handing to the recipient those objects which belong to each degree, and in pronouncing the words which confer the right of practicing the duties of the respective Orders.

7. The inward grace conferred by this Sacrament consists (1) in an increase of sanctifying grace; (2) in the conferring of various Sacerdotal powers corresponding to each degree, and (3) it imparts the graces which are necessary for the execution of these functions.

8. Only the Pope and Bishops can administer this Sacrament. Abbots can administer the four Minor Orders to such subjects who have already made their vows. The subjects, or recipients of this Sacrament must be men who have attained the prescribed age, and who possess the virtue and knowledge necessary for such exalted dignity. They must be free from the bond of marriage and from any qualities which would be inconsistent with the priestly state.

9. According to the wishes of the Church, ordinations should take place during the Ember days, because the faithful are implored to fast, and to pray on those days that God may grant them worthy priests.

MINOR ORDERS.

1. The candidate for the priesthood is initiated into the ranks of the clergy by a ceremony called tonsure. The conferring of the tonsure is no ordination, it confers no office and no spiritual power. The recipient is thereby introduced from the laity into the clerical state. It is of very ancient origin and is called "Tonsure" because the hair is cut in

the form of a crown, solemnly done by the Bishop. With it he gives the candidate the surplice, or ecclesiastical dress, to indicate the putting off of the old man, and the putting on of the new.

2. The first of the Minor Orders is that of Doorkeeper. In the time of the Christian persecution the office of Doorkeeper was of great importance, and was intrusted only to reliable men, who were ordained for this special office. It was the duty of the Doorkeeper to inform the faithful beforehand, of the time and place of meeting, and even during the Divine Service he had to guard the door against the intrusion of heretics and unbelievers.

3. The second Minor Order is that of Lector, or Reader, a cleric nearer to the sanctuary. While the Doorkeeper had to stand at the door, the Reader stood in the middle of the Church before the assembled congregation. The office of Lector was to read aloud for the faithful, at the beginning of Divine Service, during the so-called Mass of the Catechumens, those passages from Holy Scriptures which the Bishop or priest ordered to be read.

4. The third Minor Order is that of Exorcist, which gives to the cleric the power of casting out devils. Even laymen, in the early days of the Church, exercised this power; later, however, men were chosen and ordained for this office. The Church confers this power by a Minor Order, to show how impotent these satanic spirits of darkness are against

the power which Christ has imparted to His Church. Later on, however, in order to avoid abuse and deception, this power was reserved for priests, and even these cannot make use of this faculty, except by special permission of the Bishop.

5. The fourth Minor Order is that of Acolyte. It is the duty of the Acolyte to supply wine and water, and to carry the lights at Mass.

MAJOR ORDERS—SUB-DEACONSHIP.

1. The first of the Major Orders is that of Subdeacon. This order irrevocably incorporates the recipient into the Sacerdotal state, by which he contracts the obligation to observe continency and to say the breviary.

2. The Subdeacon is chosen to a higher service of God—to immediate participation in the Divine Service. His functions are: (1) To take care of the sacred vessels; (2) to pour wine and water into the chalice; (3) to sing the Epistle at High Mass; (4) to hold the book of the Gospel for the deacon, and to carry it to the Celebrant to kiss; (5) to carry the cross in the processions; (6) to assist the deacon in all his functions, and to receive the offerings of the people. He ascends the altar with the priest and deacon and brings the chalice, paten and host to the altar. At High Mass he wears the priestly vestments, excepting the stole and chasuble, instead of which he wears the dalmatic.

3. Celibacy of the clergy is not a command of recent date. Those Apostles who were married before they were called to the Apostleship, left their wives when called by our Lord. The Church has always endeavored not to choose married men for the priesthood, and only out of necessity, or exceptionally, has admitted married men to this state, who then, as a rule, have separated from their wives. The sanctity of this state makes this obligation readily understood. The sublimity of the Holy Sacrifice requires immaculate purity and undivided surrender of self, on the part of the one who offers the Sacrifice. The preaching of the Divine Word and the administration of the Holy Sacraments require that the priest be free and independent from all human considerations, which might hamper him in the fulfillment of his duties.

4. The prayers of the Breviary are essentially as old as Christianity itself. At stated hours of the day, the first Christians assembled together to praise God by prayer, reading and the singing of psalms and hymns. When toward the close of the IV. century the laity withdrew, the clergy alone continued to recite these prayers. St. Jerome, at the request of Pope Damasus, arranged the psalms and lessons for the differnt hours and days, and this arrangement was universally introduced. These prayers were called Officium—that is, duty, because the priest was always obliged to pray them. Since in the course of time, additions were made to the Office, Pope Gregory VII. abridged it again, and called it the Breviary—abbreviated office.

The Council of Trent ordered a revision of the Breviary and enforced anew the obligation of saying it. In the Greek church the same hours for prayer are observed, as in the Roman, and at the present time even recited solemnly in the Church.

DEACONSHIP.

1. The word "Deacon" comes from the Greek and means servant, because the Deacon serves the priest.

2. The Apostles appointed seven Deacons at Jerusalem, and from this time it became common in all the churches. They are the seven candles of the sanctuary—the seven angels of the Apocalypse. The Apostles ordained them by the imposition of hands, and by prayer; in the same manner Deacons are now ordained.

3. The Deacon is now permitted to stand near the priest at the altar, to baptize, to preach, and to sing the Gospel. Formerly the Deacons were the constant companions of the priest, and in early times a priest could not say Mass without a Deacon at his side. The Deacons prepared the Faithful for the sacraments, visited the imprisoned, and the sick, administered Communion, took care of the poor, and guarded the property of the Church. In the course of time all of these duties devolved entirely upon the priest.

4. Besides the dalmatic, the Deacon receives the stole, but wears it over the left shoulder, fastened at the right side to indicate that his participation in the priestly functions is yet limited.

THE PRIESTHOOD.

1. The word "Priest" comes from the Greek, presbyter, meaning elder, because in the first centuries of Christianity the priests were chosen mostly from among men advanced in years. As Christ, besides the Apostles, chose seventy disciples to be their assistants, so the Apostles appointed priests as assistants to the bishops in the different congregations.

This regulation has remained unchanged even to this time.

2. Priesthood is conferred by the Bishop, through the imposition of hands and prayer. The Priest receives at ordination the three-fold power—to bless, to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to forgive sins. Besides this three-fold power the Priest receives an increase of sanctifying grace, and special graces to strengthen him for the onerous duties of his state.

3. As a sign of his power the Priest wears the stole crossed on his breast. His power is greater than that of the deacon, but still, less than that of the bishop, who wears the stole pendant on each side. The Priest receives the chasuble because the power to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is given to him.

RITE OF ORDINATION.

1. The Seven Orders and the Tonsure are administered during the Bishop's Mass, because they are all steps, or degrees, to the Most Holy Sacrifice; they are administered during the time between the Introit and the Gospel.

2. The Minor Orders are conferred by the Bishop handing to the recipient while praying over him, the symbols of the different orders. To the Doorkeeper he gives the keys; to the Exorcist, the book containing the exorcisms; to the Lector, the book of the lessons; and to the Acolyte, a candlestick without a candle, and empty cruets.

3. At the beginning of the ceremonies, those who are to receive Major Orders, prostrate themselves before the altar, while the Bishop, with all the priests present, recites the Litany of All Saints; this is to signify that the candidate for ordination is dead to the world, and consecrates himself entirely to the service of the Most High.

4. After the Litany of All Saints the ordination follows.

The Subdeaconship by the Bishop's handing him the chalice, paten, and filled cruets, because the Subdeacon has to make the immediate preparation for the Sacrifice; the Deaconship and Priesthood, by the imposition of hands and prayer.

5. After the ordination proper, the Bishop, while reciting the appropriate prayers, hands to those ordained the significant symbols of the power which has just been conferred on them; first the vestments; then to the subdeacon a book of Epistles, and to the deacon a book of Gospels. With these their ordination is finished, and they hasten to exercise the functions of their office, therefore the subdeacon sings the Epistle, and the deacon the Gospel of the Mass.

6. The priest is ordained by the imposition of hands and then invested with the stole and chasuble, after which, by symbolic ceremonies, he is initiated into the threefold power which he has just received: viz., (a) As dispenser of blessings, the Bishop consecrates him by anointing his hands with Catechumen Oil. The anointing of the hands expresses the power of benedictions which will in future flow from his hands. The thumb and the forefinger particularly, of each hand, are anointed because with them the priest touches the body of our Lord in the Holy Sacrifice. In the Holy Sacrifice this grace is renewed and increased continually. (b) As sacrificial priest, the Bishop consecrates him by handing him the chalice with wine and water, and the paten with the host. This is to signify that he has received the power to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The newly ordained makes immediate use of this power, as from now on he celebrates the Holy Sacrifice in union with the Bishop. (c) As minister of the Sacrament of Penance, the Bishop consecrates the candidate for ordination by placing both hands upon his head, after Communion, with the words of Christ: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained."

After the newly ordained has promised obedience to the Bishop, and received from him the kiss of peace, he is dismissed by the Bishop with a paternal admonition and a solemn blessing.

7. At all the ordinations the clerical candidate holds a lighted candle in his hand until the Offertory when he offers it to the Bishop, to express thereby the love of sacrifice with which he consecrates himself to the service of the Church. In like manner the newly ordained receives Communion from the hands of the Bishop after his Communion—symbolical of his close union with the Church of Christ and her representatives.

8. How holy and exalted is the priestly office achieved through a sevenfold consecration! He is the mediator between God and man, daily he offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for this purpose. He is the father and shepherd of the flock confided to his care, their teacher and guide on the road to heaven from the cradle to the grave. His life is a life of sacrifice. How many obstacles he had to overcome and how many sacrifices he had to make, before he could enter the priesthood! And as pastor, what dangers, what hardships and difficulties he has to endure to save the souls entrusted to his care. Therefore the faithful should show their pastors respect and obedience; they should listen to their words and follow their advice, remembering the words of our Lord, "Who hears you, hears me, and who despises you, despises me."

THE EPISCOPACY.

1. The name Bishop comes from the Greek, "episcopus" and means "overseer," because the Bishop in the name of the Church, has supervision

over the diocese entrusted to him. The fullness of spiritual power is embodied in the Bishop, the might and dignity of all the preceding orders.

2. For the consecration of a Bishop there must be at least three Bishops present; he is consecrated by the imposition of hands, and prayer. Besides an increase of sanctifying grace, this Sacrament confers the threefold power of the office of shepherd, priest and teacher, and the special graces necessary for these offices.

3. The consecration of a Bishop is similar to the ordination of a priest but it is a more solemn ceremony.

(1) Before Mass begins the Bishop elect takes an oath before the Bishop who is to consecrate him, that he will be faithful to the Holy See, that he will promote its authority; that he will, at stated intervals prescribed, visit the City of Rome and give an account of his pastoral office to the Pope. Thereupon he begins the Mass with the consecrating Bishop, during which the consecration takes place. Both read the entire Mass together, both communicate from the same Host, and out of the same Chalice to show the bond of charity which binds them to Christ. The real consecration begins before the Gospel. The Litany of All Saints is said while the Bishop-elect lies prostrate before the altar. His renunciation and sacrifice ought to be more perfect than that of the priest.

(2) The book of Gospels is opened and laid upon his neck and shoulders, to designate that the Bishop is the bearer and guardian of the Holy Faith.

Then the three Bishops lay their hands upon his head and say: "Receive the Holy Ghost." This is the actual moment of consecration.

(3) The new Bishop is anointed with Chrism on the crown of his head, and on his hands. He is now the anointed of the Lord, equipped with a fullness of spiritual power far greater than that of the priest. He is the head, therefore he is anointed on the head, the priests, who are anointed only on the hands, are his servants.

The crook or bishop's staff is given him, to initiate him as shepherd over his flock. He is then handed the bishop's ring; through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass he is intimately united with his bride, the Holy Church of God, therefore he is handed the ring. The book of the Gospels is given him to touch, as a sign of his office as teacher.

(4) At the Offertory, the newly consecrated Bishop offers bread and wine into the hands of the Consecrator, and two large burning candles, to express, thereby, that he will always be solicitous for the Holy Sacrifice; and, furthermore, that like the burning candles he will be consumed as a living sacrifice in the service of God. The large candles denote that his light (example) must shine greater than that of the priest.

(5) Before the last Gospel the mitre is placed on his head, to show that he is to combat for the Church and to be a defender of the truth.

Gloves are put on his hands as a sign that he must keep them pure, and thus preserve the strength of imparting blessings. He is then conducted to his throne, which is delivered to him, and thus installed in the government of his diocese. While the Te Deum is being sung, the clergy render him homage and allegiance by kissing his hand.

Thereupon he begins his Episcopal functions; namely, he is led by the two assisting bishops through the Church bestowing his blessing upon all the people. Arriving at the altar, he imparts the solemn Episcopal blessing.

How great is the dignity of a Bishop, how wonderful his power! He is a follower of the Apostles, equipped with the same powers as they. In his diocese he is the ambassador of Christ; the source of all blessings and graces. From his hands comes the Sacred Oil, the matter of several sacraments; by his hands you become a soldier of Christ in the Sacrament of Confirmation. From his hands come the spiritual pastors of the whole diocese. Thank God for this wonderful establishment of the Episcopacy and pray diligently for priests and bishops.

MATRIMONY.

1. By the institution of the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony, Christ regulated and sanctified family life. The better regulated this life is, the more moral and happy will mankind be. Therefore the holy reception of Matrimony, and the sacred inviolability of the marriage tie, is of the greatest importance to man.

2. Whoever wishes to be happily married must above all pray God to direct his choice, he should take the advice of his parents, and other persons of experience. He should consider first his spiritual and then his temporal welfare. Therefore he must be guided in his choice more by religion and virtue than by worldly considerations. He must be especially careful, that there be no impediments in the way of his marriage. These impediments are of two kinds, simple impediment, and nullification.

3. Simple impediments do not nullify the marriage but only render it unlawful; that is, one cannot receive this Sacrament without committing a mortal sin, unless the impediments are removed. They are as follows:

(1) Time. The solemnities of marriage must not take place, between the first Sunday of Advent and Epiphany, or between Ash Wednesday and Low Sunday.

(2) Previous engagement to another person, unless the engagement has been annulled by mutual consent.

(3) Simple vows of chastity.

(4) Ecclesiastical prohibition. This includes the marriage of a Catholic with a baptized non-Catholic, if the conditions prescribed by the Church are not complied with.

These conditions are: (1) The non-Catholic must not restrict the liberty of the Catholic in the practice of his or her religion. (2) When there is hope that the non-Catholic may be brought to the knowledge of the true faith. (3) Both parties must promise that their children shall be brought up as Catholics.

The Church has always disapproved of mixed marriages, even when these conditions are complied with; she has condemned them in more than thirty councils. The great danger to the Catholic party is: that he is liable to fall away from the faith entirely, or become indifferent. There is also great danger that the children may not be brought up Catholics, especially if the Catholic party should die young. Then the danger of divorce, which the non-Catholic may obtain at any time, and be free to contract another marriage. Such unions cannot produce concord or true happiness, because their moral foundation, unity of faith, is wanting. Such a marriage is not a faithful image of that intimate and indissoluble bond of Christ with His Church, which a Christian marriage should be.

Catholics should remember, that the bond of a previous marriage is an impediment which death

alone can remove. What, therefore, God hath joined together let not man put asunder (Matt. XIX 6). No court, no judge, no power on earth, can break the bond which unites husband and wife. For certain just causes, especially for the crime of adultery, they may *live separately,* but they are still married and cannot marry again. Let it be remembered that no so-called divorce, no guilt, no desertion, can ever sever the marriage bond. Nothing but a *certain knowledge* of the death of one party can make it lawful for the other to marry.

4. The impediments that make marriage impossible, or nullify it, are chiefly the following:

(1) The absence of mutual consent, as when one of the parties does not consent, or is compelled only by force, or rapine, etc.

(2) A mistake in the person one marries,

(3) A solemn vow of Chastity,

(4) The Order of Subdeaconship,

(5) Another marriage-tie still existing,

(6) Difference of religion when one of the parties has not been baptized.

(7) Consanguinity and affinity to the fourth degree; spiritual affinity contracted in Baptism and Confirmation.

(8) Clandestine marriage, which has not been contracted before the lawful pastor, or another priest approved by him for this purpose, before two witnesses.

The Pope or Bishop may grant dispensations in some of these cases, when a sufficient cause warrants a dispensation. No one should make use of dispensations unless the cause is true and just.

5. The Church desires that the choice of a state of life should not be thoughtlessly entered upon, and that the Sacrament of Matrimony should not be received without due preparation. The first step towards a future marriage is the engagement or betrothal.

The bethrothed should make good use of the time of their engagement, in order to examine themselves earnestly, and see whether their hearts are so closely attached to each other as to make them congenial and happy consorts throughout their future lives. They should prepare themselves by fervent prayer and decorous behavior, especially by a worthy reception of the Sacraments for this decisive step. During this time they should also not omit to make a general confession, in order to participate in the fullness of graces bestowed by this Sacrament.

6. The engagement is made public by the publication of the banns; the faithful are required to make known any impediments, if they are aware of any, and also to assist the betrothed by their prayers, so that they may enter the marriage state with the blessing of God. Only in exceptional cases is the publication of the banns to be omitted, and the omission must be sanctioned by the Bishop. St. John Chrysostom says: "Happy the young men and

maidens who come to the nuptial altar with a pure heart! How true will be their united love! How sincere their mutual esteem and how firm their friendship."

7. The Church also exhorts pastors of souls to examine the bridal parties, to see whether they know everything that behooves them to know, and to give them the instruction they need. This fatherly instruction is often the turning point for the weal of those about to be married.

CEREMONIES OF MATRIMONY.

1. The ceremonies of Matrimony are significant of the duties of the marriage state, and of the graces imparted to the bridal couple.

In the presence of the congregation the bride and groom pledge themselves by the bond of indissoluble fidelity and love; the Church confirms this bond and invokes the blessings and graces of heaven upon the bridal pair.

2. The priest standing before the altar facing the couple, who stand at the foot of the altar, the witnesses behind them, gives them a few words of admonition and instruction on the Sacrament of Matrimony and its duties.

3. Then follows the real act of Matrimony. The priest asks each separately if with their free will and consent, they enter into wedlock, and on answering in the affirmative, in an audible voice, joining

right hands they pledge their troth; each repeating the formula after the priest, in which they each promise separately, to have and to hold the other for better, for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death do part them. The priest then, to indicate the indissolubility of the marriage tie, places the stole around their joined hands, unites them in the name of the Holy Trinity, and sprinkles them with Holy Water. The groom now places the ring upon the book, the priest blesses it and returns it to the groom, who places it upon the third finger of the bride, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." The ring without beginning or end denotes the never ending love and fidelity which the bridal pair pledge each other. The joining of hands is a solemn pledge, as if confirming by an oath the promise to be true to their marriage vows as long as they live, and to mutually support each other.

Placing the stole around the joined hands, with the words spoken, shows that the Church acknowledges and blesses the marriage as completed, and takes it under Her protection. With this blessing and protection of the Church the newly married should enter upon their state of life, for which the priest prays in the versicles and prayers that follow, which finish the marriage ceremony.

4. In the Mass which follows, the marriage is solemnly blessed. Even since the time of the Apostles, it was a sacred custom to sanctify mar-

riage by the Sacrifice of the Mass and the reception of Holy Communion. This solemn blessing is wholly united with the Sacrifice of the Mass, and must only be given during the Mass. As this blessing concerns the bride chiefly, it is not given to a widow, because she received it at the first marriage, nor is it given in the closed time even if the Bishop's dispensation has been obtained. Nor in the case of a mixed marriage; the Church cannot bless such marriages, because she looks upon them with disfavor.

5. The Church has in her liturgy a special Mass* for the bridegroom and bride; this Mass must not be used in such cases where the nuptial blessing cannot be given. As far as the Pater Noster, this Mass differs in nothing from an ordinary Mass, but when the priest has come to that part of the service immediately before the "Libera nos," standing at the Epistle corner of the altar, he turns to the bridal pair and reads two prayers over them, in which the blessing of God is besought on behalf of the bride principally. When the priest has communicated, he gives Communion also to the bridal pair and before the last Gospel he implores a special blessing upon them, and then blesses the people. Excepting the Sacrament of Holy Orders, no sacrament is more closely united with the Sacrifice of the Mass than that of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

*The nuptial Mass pro sponso et sponsa is a votive Mass, without Gloria or Credo.

6. On their return home, a wedding feast is prepared. In this there is nothing blameworthy; we know that our Lord, His Blessed Mother and disciples honored such a festivity with their presence. This should remind the newly married to celebrate their wedding in a manner worthy of such sacred guests.

The wedding day is a day of joy, and furthermore a sacred day for the married couple, who have received two sacraments on this day, and entered upon a new state of life with the blessings and prayers of the Church; therefore excess and sin of every kind is to be excluded from such festivities.

7. A jubilee wedding is a festival of gratitude for a couple who have been married twenty-five or fifty years. It is celebrated in order to thank God for the graces received during this time, to renew the former marriage vows and to beg the blessing of the Church on the remainder of their days, that they may finally enter into the joys of the Lord.

CONCLUSION.

The sacraments are the most precious treasures of the Church.

1. The Church has nothing more holy than the sacraments, for they are the fruits of the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. Therefore the Christian should learn to know and treasure them, and never approach them without careful preparation.

2. The Church has nothing more salutary than the sacraments, because upon them depends the salvation of mankind. If our soul is dear to us and we long for heaven let us not delay to make diligent use of these means of grace.

3. The Church has nothing more divine than the sacraments, for God is their author and through them the work of redemption continues for the salvation of man.

VESPERS.

BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

1. The public prayers of the Church, other than those in the great Sacrifice of the Mass, are contained in the Breviary. The whole Office for each day consists of Matins and Lauds; Prime, Tierce, Sext and None (the prayers for the *first, third, sixth,* and *ninth* hours, the old Roman division of the day); Vespers and Compline. This Office was originally chanted daily by the faithful, and is still chanted by some religious Orders, the preservers of primitive tradition and fervor. It is daily recited by the Clergy; and on Sundays and Holydays the Vespers are publicly chanted as part of the solemn worship of the day, to enable the faithful to join in so holy and venerable a form of prayer.

2. All the parts of the Office consist of Psalms and Canticles from the Holy Scripture, with lessons also from Scripture, or the Holy Fathers, and appropriate to the day.

The Psalms in the Vespers for Sunday are the 109th and the following, including the 113th, although very frequently the 116th is substituted for the last of these. This series of Psalms is most suitable to the ordinary wants of the Church on her weekly festivals. The first is a kind of commemoration of all the great Mysteries of our Redeemption; the second alludes to the praise of God *in the congregation;* the third commemorates the graces and privileges of the Just; the fourth is a Psalm of praise, as is also that substituted occasionally for the fifth; the fifth celebrates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. All are prophecies of our Lord and of His Immaculate Mother, as well as of the Church. In them we sing the praises of Christ, our Lord, as Priest forever, offering Sacrifice, like Melchisedech, in the form of bread and wine; as Lord of lords and King of kings; as true to His promises of ever abiding by His Church, investing her with miraculous powers; and ever spreading the mystic Banquet; in them we praise Him as our redeemer and our God whom we adore; in them we praise that immaculate Virgin—*the joyful mother of children*—and with her raise our hearts and voices to glorify God.

3. It is not, then, an unmeaning Service, but one most appropriate and consoling. Hence, though it is not of obligation to attend Vespers, as it is to hear Mass, all the saints and spiritual writers of the

Church urge the faithful to be present at this Office with piety and devotion. For there is always more benefit and comfort to be derived from the public Offices of the church than from private devotions, God having ordained that *Communion of prayers* should always have the preference.

4. In this country Benediction usually follows Vespers. After the final Antiphon of the Blessed Virgin is said, the Priest, vested in surplice, stole, and cope goes up to the altar, while the choir sings the *O Salutaris Hostia;* and opening the Tabernacle, he makes a genuflection, and taking out a consecrated Host enclosed in a kind of locket called a *luna,* places this in the centre of the *Monstrance* or *Ostensorium*—a stand of gold or silver, with rays like the sun. He then descends to the foot of the altar, and puts incense into the censer; kneeling again, he receives the censer from the hand of the acolyte, and incenses the Adorable Host. When the choir sings the second line of the *Tantum ergo,* all bow humbly down, and then, during the Genitori, the priest again incenses the Blessed Sacrament.

As soon as the choir has ended the hymn the Priest chants the Versicle; and after the Response he chants the prayer of the Blessed Sacrament, and sometimes another prayer. He then kneels again, and a veil is placed around his shoulders, after which he ascends again to the altar, and, making a genuflection, takes the Monstrance, and, turning to

the people, gives the Benediction in silence, making the sign of the cross over the kneeling congregation.

Replacing the Host in the Tabernacle, he descends, and, preceded by his assistants, retires, while the choir chants the 116th Psalm, *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes,* or some other Psalm or Canticle permitted by the usage of the place.

PART THIRD.

THE SACRAMENTALS.

The Sacramentals are rites which resemble the sacraments externally. The name is applied to both the blessing or consecration given by the Church and to the objects blessed or consecrated. The name sacramental comes from the word sacrament, partly because the sacramentals stand in close intimacy with the sacraments and partly because they resemble the sacraments. Both have the outward signs with which supernatural power is united. They are, however, essentially different, the sacramentals impart only the grace of assistance, while the sacraments impart or increase sanctifying grace. The sacraments have infallible efficacy, whereas the efficacy of the sacramental depends upon the pious disposition of the recipient. The use of the sacraments is strictly commanded, but the use of the sacramentals is only recommended.

2. Although the use of the sacramentals is not strictly commanded, they are nevertheless indispensable.

We use them:

(1) When we receive the sacraments. We should advance to meet the grace of the sacraments; the Church assists us by various sacramentals, which prepare our hearts, or impress these graces deeper upon them.

(2) For the same reason sacramentals are united with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, so that by their help we may the more easily participate in the Holy Sacrifice and obtain its graces.

(3) In the course of the year sacramentals are ordered to be observed at every great festal season. The faithful thereby receive a fuller comprehension of this holy season, and also a greater participation of the graces.

(4) The graces of the Redemption should penetrate every state and condition of life. The sacramentals are the channels through which these graces are imparted to the soul for its purification and sanctification.

(5) Even inanimate creatures which nevertheless were laden with the curse of sin, shall through the sacramentals receive the blessings of the Redemption, so that they may not be a hindrance but an assistance in the way of salvation.

(6) Everything that belongs specially to the Divine Service—churches, altars, chalices, vestments, etc., must be withdrawn from the dominion

of sin; they must be replete with blessings and given up entirely to the service of God. This is accomplished by the sacramentals.

3. Christ Himself instituted the sacramentals—He imparted blessings; He blessed children and the sick, bread and fish, etc. He conferred this power upon His Apostles, when He commanded them to bless the houses which they entered, and instructed them to cast out devils, to heal the sick, etc. The Apostles did as commanded, and rejoiced at the wonderful results: this power exercised by Christ and transmitted to the Apostles, to bless and to cast out devils, is continued by the Church in the sacramentals.

All the sacramentals revert to the Holy Name of Jesus and the sign of the Cross. Christ taught the faithful to ask in His name, and promised them they would then receive everything. He told them they could cast out devils, and perform miracles in His name. And the Apostles did so; they performed innumerable miracles in His name. The sign of the Cross has been used with all the sacramentals since the time of the Apostles.

4. Christ left it to His Church to prescribe the formulas for the sacramentals. We can see by several of them that they are of Apostolic origin, viz., the blessing of Baptismal Water, the oil of Baptism, churches, sacred vessels, Holy Water, etc. The other sacramentals owe their origin to early Christian times.

5. The efficacy of the sacramentals differs according to the object to which they are applied, and is generally expressed in the prescribed prayers of each sacramental. The effects are chiefly:

(1) Man and his temporal possessions are freed from or guarded against the power of Satan.

(2) Sickness, bodily evils and injury to our possessions can be averted thereby, as well as worldly prosperity increased.

(3) The soul is strengthened against temptations or entirely freed from them; venial sins can be forgiven and the temporal punishment remitted.

(4) They effect a salutary disposition of the soul, and make it more susceptible to future graces; therefore they are used in administering the sacraments, and they may even effect the conversion of a sinner.

(5) All the circumstances of life, the entire work of the day can be sanctified by the sacramentals.

(6) Animate and inanimate creatures may, through the sacramentals, be consecrated to the service of God.

6. The efficacy of the sacramentals proceeds from the power to bless, which Christ bequeathed to His Church. That this blessing may be beneficial to man he must co-operate with this grace, that it may find entrance into his heart. The more his

heart is filled with faith and confidence, with humility and contrition, the more will the sacramentals manifest their efficacy. In how far they dispense temporal blessings, depends upon whether the blessing be salutary for his salvation or not.

7. The power to dispense the sacramentals is vested in the Sacred Ministry, still, the Church has restricted the power of priests by reserving certain exorcisms and benedictions to bishops, but several of these cases may be performed by the priest when delegated by the bishop. Such consecrations in which anointing is used, the bishop alone must perform; in extreme cases only the Pope may give a priest the faculties, for example, to missionaries. A few consecrations are reserved to the Pope alone, viz., the blessing of the Pallium, the Agnus Dei, etc.

8. The receiver of the sacramentals must be a person, for objects are blessed only for the bodily or spiritual welfare of man. He must be a faithful Catholic Christian, in order to have the right disposition for the use of the sacramentals.

The right disposition consists in being in the state of grace, or at least contrite of heart, penetrated with faith, and confidence in Christ and His holy Church, and reconciled to the Divine Will.

RITUAL OF THE SACRAMENTALS.

1. Some blessings cannot be performed except in the church and at the altar. In this case the priest vested with surplice and stole, and on some

very solemn occasions with cope also, always of the color of the day or of a color specially prescribed, stands at the Epistle side; the articles to be blessed should be placed on a table close by, not on the altar, vestments and vessels destined for Divine Service, however, excepted.

2. The priest stands, because he is Christ's representative, commissioned by the Church.

3. Every blessing begins with the words: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Then the priest makes the sign of the Cross.

The strength and efficacy of all the sacramentals rest upon the supplication of the name of God and the sign of the Cross.

4. Then follows the salutation: "The Lord be with thee, and with thy spirit."

5. The priest prays with joined hands to denote the humble supplication contained in every blessing.

6. The sign of the Cross is made once or oftener during the blessing; the name of God is also called upon, because this is the source of all blessings.

7. Finally, the object to be blessed is sprinkled with Holy Water in the form of a Cross. To this object the same power and efficacy are imparted, which the blessing of the Church imparts to Holy Water.

8. In some solemn blessings Incense is used; and in several solemn consecrations the bishop anoints with Holy Oil, indicating thereby not alone the fullness of the grace of the Holy Ghost but also that this same grace is, in a measure, imparted. The sprinkling with Holy Water, the use of Incense and Holy Oil, show us the fundamental effects of the sacramentals—purification, sanctification and consecration.

CLASSIFICATION.

1. The Sacramentals may be divided according to their use and efficacy, into the following:

(1) Exorcism, which liberates from the power of Satan and frees from sin,

(2) Benedictions, which impart, furthermore, sanctity, graces and blessings,

(3) Consecrations, which beside the efficacies just mentioned, consecrate a person or thing to the service of God.

EXORCISM.

By the sin of our first parents Satan obtained power over mankind and all nature. Christ, it is true, conquered Satan, but as far as it concerns us, the conflict is not ended and therefore the influence of Satan is not entirely lost or destroyed.

The Evil Spirit can, God permitting, obtain power over the body of man, and through the body obtain power partly over the soul; this dominion of Satan over the body is called "possession."

2. The Church confronts this power of Satan by exorcism, which consists in commanding the devil to depart in the name of Christ, that he may not injure body or soul.

3. The Church makes use of exorcism for a threefold purpose, viz.:

(1) To withdraw the power of Satan from every object used in connection with the Divine Service, and to make it inacessible to his influence, viz., Holy Water.

(2) To lessen or destroy the injurious influence Satan has upon the soul or worldly possessions.

(3) To liberate those possessed, from the thraldom of Satan.

4. Christ Himself cast out devils, and gave His disciples also the power to do so. Ever since, the Church has made use of this power, and has made that of Exorcist one of the Minor Orders. To avoid abuse, the exercise of this power has been in later times restricted to priests; and even they in important cases, require special permission from the bishop.

5. Exorcism is a spiritual combat with the powers of darkness; therefore the priest must employ all his moral strength against Satan, consequently, he should begin the exorcism only after a careful preparation, with faith and confidence in God, patiently continued to the end.

6. The Church commands great caution in the use of exorcism. Every unusual phenomenon should not be attributed to Satan, but should be carefully tested by natural means, and all superstition and suspicion conscientiously, avoided.

BLESSINGS.

1. Through exorcism, man and nature are freed from the power of Satan; through blessings he is sanctified, his original destiny restored. Through blessings, nature is again made serviceable for man; many spiritual and temporal evils are averted, and spiritual as well as temporal welfare procured.

2. The power to bless is given to priests and bishops, and is exercised by them either in general or in special cases to produce a certain efficacy prescribed by the Church.

3. Blessing consists in prayer united to an outward sign, generally the sign of the Cross, or by the imposition of hands, whereby the minister of the Church invokes the Divine blessing upon others, if they are worthy of receiving it.

4. Even in the Old Testament, God designated minutely how Aaron and his followers should bless the people, and promised that He would fulfill their blessing. How much greater is the priesthood of the New Testament, therefore the priest's blessing will at least be no less efficacious.

"Into whatsoever house you enter," said Christ to His disciples, "first say: Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him, but if not, it shall return to you." From these words of our Lord, the faithful have always believed, that the priest has power to bestow blessings upon all who are worthy of receiving them.

This blessing is more particularly to be desired from the priest newly ordained, because he has so lately received the fullness of this power from the Holy Ghost.

5. The priest may bless publicly or privately; publicly in connection with the Divine Service, especially at the end of Mass; this was prescribed even in early Christian times. He blesses privately, when blessing the sick or any who asks his blessing.

6. As the consecration of a bishop is higher than that of a priest, so the bishop's blessing will be more efficacious. When the bishop bestows his blessing, it is done more solemnly than the blessing of a priest; he makes the sign of the Cross three times. which is not permitted to a priest. The bishop may give this solemn blessing apart from the Divine Service. Privately he may bless the people everywhere even on the streets and highways. We should eagerly seek to receive this richly laden blessing.

7. The Papal Blessing is the most efficacious because it is bestowed by the highest shepherd, the vicegerent of Christ, to whom the supreme power

over the treasury of Christ's graces is committed. With the Papal Blessing also called Apostolic, an indulgence is generally united.

The Holy Father bestows this blessing solemnly on the festival of Easter, on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, and on other special occasions. Privately he confers it on all who ask it. Very frequently he empowers bishops and religious priests to give the Papal Blessing on certain days to the faithful. As we have before mentioned the Papal Blessing is given in the General Absolution at the hour of death.

8. Benediction, or blessing with the Blessed Sacrament, was not known in early Christian times, it was only introduced after the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi (in the XIV. century). It is easy to see that this Blessing differs from those already named, for here it is no longer the priest who blesses but Christ Himself, therefore the priest uses no words of blessing when giving Benediction, but makes one sign of the cross with the monstrance; when given by a Bishop he makes three.

9. The priest may bless with the relics of the saints, while doing so he invokes the intercession of the saints on behalf of those present.

10. The blessing which parents give to their children, superiors to their subjects, does not compare with the priestly blessing, for it does not proceed from a person canonically empowered to impart blessings. Nevertheless a parent's blessing has a higher significance than that of pure intercession.

By the fourth commandment, God gave parents a higher authority over their children—made them His representative, consequently their prayers and blessings must be of greater might before God, than those of others. When the Apostle speaks of a universal priesthood, parents, first of all, are called by God to direct this priesthood in the family circle and to call down the blessing of God upon their offspring. Ecclesiasticus says (III 10-11): "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children, but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation." The Christian mother will not fail to make the sign of the Cross upon her babe, nor pious children fail to ask their parent's blessing, at least before going to bed or when leaving home. To many a young man, the remembrance of a parent's blessing has often proved a safeguard in time of temptation, while battling with the world. The blessing of a dying parent especially, is most solemn and efficacious, and often has been the means of reclaiming the most hardened sinner.

11. The Ritual contains many blessings for objects of ordinary use, such as food, the houses we live in, the cattle and fields. Even for the modern inventions, railroads, telegraph, electric lights, etc. The faithful should be encouraged to make frequent use of this means of grace, and thus draw down the blessing of heaven upon themselves and their undertakings. By the use of Holy Water we may draw the blessing of the Church upon ourselves and our possessions.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

It is said that the Way of the Cross owes its origin to the Mother of God.

Tradition says, that the Blessed Mother of God was often wont to walk in the steps of her Son to Calvary, pausing at the spots marked by some special incidents. The early Christians flocked in crowds to the holy places to follow the Via Crucis. But when, in the Middle Ages, the Holy Land fell into the hands of the infidels, and the devout pilgrim could only visit the scenes of our Lord's sufferings at the risk of his life, the Stations were erected in churches, and enriched by the Popes with large indulgences. St. Francis of Assisi contributed greatly to spread this devotion.

1. The Way of the Cross is the name given to the fourteen stations which depict the way along which our Redeemer passed bearing His Cross, from Pilot's palace to Mount Calvary.

The fourteen stations consist of fourteen wooden crosses, to which pictures and inscriptions are generally added. They are erected in churches, sometimes in the open air, on the slope of a hill; occasionally in cemeteries.

2. The manner of performing the Way of the Cross is to go from one station to another, making meanwhile a meditation on our Lord's Passion.

It is not necessary to go from station to station in the church if one stands up and kneels down as every station is being made. It is enough to meditate on the Passion in general, making a special meditation at each station. An Our Father, Hail Mary, and an act of contrition are generally recited at every one.

3. By performing the Way of the Cross large indulgences may be gained; we also obtain contrition for sin and are incited to the practice of virtue.

Daily meditation on the Passion of Christ is more profitable than fasting every Friday in the year on bread and water, or taking the discipline to blood. A single tear shed in compassion for Our Lord's sufferings is of greater value in God's sight than a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We learn how acceptable meditation on His Passion is to Our Lord, from the revelations of St. Bridget. Our Lord once appeared to her, with blood streaming from all His wounds. She asked what had reduced Him to this pitiable condition. He answered: "It is the doing of those who never consider the great love I manifested towards them by all I suffered upon the cross." It was as a continual memorial of His Passion that Our Lord instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The same indulgences are granted for making the Way of the Cross as for visiting the corresponding places in the Holy Land; they can be gained, however, only once in a day. The wooden crosses must be blessed by a Francis-

can, or some priest who has the requisite powers, and the stations must be visited without any break. The Way of the Cross is a means of obtaining the grace of contrition. As the Israelites who were bitten by the fiery serpent were healed by looking upon the brazen serpent, so sinners are healed of the deadly wound of sin by frequent meditation on the Passion of Christ. The Way of the Cross is also an incentive to the practice of virtue. The saints often tell us that meditation on Our Lord's Passion imparts strength to suffer not merely with patience, but with joy. Our arrogance, our avarice, our anger will be cured by the humility, the poverty, the patience of the Son of God. If, O man, you would progress from virtue to virtue, contemplate with all possible devotion the sufferings of Our Lord, for this is most conducive to sanctity.

4. If we are prevented from making the Way of the Cross, we can gain the indulgence by reciting the Our Father, Hail Mary, and the Gloria twenty times, holding meanwhile a crucifix blessed for the Stations in our hand.

The hindrances must be of sufficient nature, such as long distance from a church, sickness, etc. The cross for performing the stations must be of strong material, with the figure of the Savior attached to it, and must have been duly blessed for the purpose. The indulgences are not gained if the Crucifix is not the property of the individual using it, but if several persons perform the devotion to-

gether, it is enough for one to hold the cross in his hand. For the sick it suffices to take the cross in the hand and make an act of contrition. The Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father, are recited fourteen times for the fourteen stations, five times in honor of the five wounds of Our Lord and once for the Holy Father. If the cross has been blessed by a Redemptionist the prayers need only be repeated fourteen times.

THE CHURCHING OF WOMEN.

1. It is an old established custom for a woman after the birth of a child to present herself to the priest in the church, to receive his blessing and to implore the blessing of God upon her child. This custom was observed even in the Old Law. Every mother had to present herself in the temple, with her infant, forty days after the birth of a boy and eighty days after the birth of a girl. This law, it is true, does not apply to Christian women because the Church has abolished Jewish ceremonies, but since the Mother of God conformed to this rule, the Christian mother will in all humility follow the example of the Blessed Virgin. She should thank God for her happy delivery, and offer her child to God, promising to bring it up in the fear and love of God, and finally implore the blessings of heaven upon herself and her child.

2. The priest sprinkles the woman with Holy Water, while she kneels at the door of the church

holding a lighted candle, and after reciting the twenty-third psalm, reaching the end of the stole into her hand he leads her into the church, saying: "Come into the temple of God; adore the Son of the Blessed Virgin, who has given thee fruitfulness." The woman then kneels before the altar, while the priest, having said a prayer of thanksgiving, blesses her and again sprinkles her with Holy Water in the form of a cross. This rite is for women who have borne children in wedlock.

3. The lighted candle is to remind us of the words of the pious Simeon who called Christ the Light of the world, by it the mother also acknowledges that she will bring up her child in the light of the true faith.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL.

1. The Church not only stands by her children until death but does not delay to send help and consolation to the soul in eternity, and to prepare a worthy burial place for the body where it will await the general resurrection. This resting place is the graveyard consecrated especially for this purpose. The Church deems it only proper that the body of a Christian should be interred in consecrated ground, because it was so often sanctified by the reception of the Blessed Sacrament.

2. The Church buries her dead with many outward ceremonies, prayers and blessings, not only to

show her respect for the dead, but at the same time to impress the living with the truth, that the body is not to remain forever in the grave but to arise to eternal reward. She thus honors the body as the temple of God, edifies the living, and procures help and consolation for the soul, if it is in need.

3. Ecclesiastical burial is denied in the following instances:

(1) To pagans, Jews, and infidels. (2) To apostates. (3) To notorious heretics and schismatics. (4) To those publicly executed and interdicted. (5) To those who committed suicide, if before expiring they did not manifest any repentance. Those, however, who committed suicide while insane or deranged can be buried by the Church. (6) To those killed in a duel. (7) To public and notorious sinners who die in final impenitence. (8) To those who die in the act of some grievous crime. (9) Finally to those who refused the Sacraments at the point of death.

4. The body is prepared for burial, by washing and dressing it properly before placing it in the coffin.

5. The body remains for a time unburied, in order to make certain that life is really extinct. In former times the body was brought to the church, where the faithful prayed psalms and other prayers, day and night, for the departed.

6. A Crucifix is placed in the hand of the departed, and one upon the coffin; a cross is borne in procession to the grave and, finally, one is planted upon it, to show that the departed died a servant of the Cross, and through the Cross hopes for eternal life.

7. The bells are tolled to pay a last honor to the dead, calling upon all the faithful to pray for him, and accompany him to the grave.

8. One or more candles are kept burning beside the corpse to signify that the departed walked in the light of faith, and to remind us of the oft repeated prayer: "May eternal light shine upon him."

9. The priest and servers are vested in black to express their grief and sympathy for the bereaved, also to express their sorrow for the soul lest it has not yet attained to the vision of God. This maternal care and sadness of the Church, is shown in the whole burial rite.

The Church does not wish that her children should be indifferent and callous at the death of relatives, she seeks rather to ameliorate and ennoble their grief by participating in their sadness, and lead them to think of a meeting beyond the grave.

According to the Roman Ritual, the corpse should be carried to the house of God, and a Requiem Mass said, then the body is blessed and

borne to the grave accompanied by the clergy, friends and relatives praying or singing mournful psalms on the way. Before it is interred it receives a last and farewell blessing.

10. The absolution, also called Libera because the hymn begins with this word, is a blessing over the corpse that the Lord may be merciful to him and pardon him in judgment. The Church like a loving mother stands before the Divine Judge and implores grace for her child. This absolution takes place after Mass before the bier; here Holy Water and Incense are used as well as at the burial itself.

11. The words spoken at the grave: "Remember man that dust thou art and into dust thou shalt return." remind us of the judgment pronounced by God over all mankind after the sin of our first parents. The Church impresses it every year upon the forehead of her children on Ash Wednesday, so that they shall always have it before their eyes. This sentence is fulfilled at the burial of the body.

12. Children who die after Baptism before they have come to the use of reason are free from sin and need no prayers. Therefore at the burial of children, psalms of praise and thanksgiving are said, and there are no prayers for the repose of the soul. Signs of mourning are not appropriate here, so the priest is vested in white, for white is the color of innocence.

Because the child is under the ban of original sin, Holy Water and Incense are used, to purify and sanctify it, that it may be worthy to stand one day, in the presence of God. When a Mass is said at the burial of a child, it is said in honor of the Angels.

CONSECRATIONS.

1. Consecration is the act of solemnly dedicating a person or thing to the service of God. Persons and things consecrated, are not only withdrawn from the influence of Satan, as through the exorcism, nor only are blessings and graces imparted, but besides all these they receive an impress of a special character, a stamp of higher rank whereby they are qualified for the service of God.

2. The effect of this consecration is twofold. A person or thing is consecrated for the service of God, and equipped for this purpose with higher power and at the same time qualified to procure grace and blessings for others. Consecrated persons impart these blessings by their effectual agency, consecrated objects, however, through their application.

3. Consecrations are divided into that of persons and objects. The consecration of persons is reserved to bishops. A great many objects may be blessed by the priest, such as Holy Water, the blessing of ashes and the blessings performed during Holy Week.

DEDICATION OF A CHURCH.

1. When a Church is about to be built, a bishop, or priest appointed by him, must solemnly perform the laying of the corner stone; for the house of God must be blessed from the foundation throughout all its parts.

(1) First, the place upon which the church is to be built, especially that place destined for the high altar is sprinkled with water blessed for the purpose, accompanied with prayer.

(2) The corner stone is blessed in the same manner and marked on all sides with the sign of the Cross, it is then laid while the Litany of the Saints, and other prayers are said. This blessing of the corner stone extends to all parts of the foundation.

2. The dedication of a church is only a precursor of the consecration, in case the latter cannot take place, the bishop may delegate a priest to perform the dedication, but not the consecration.

3. The solemn blessing, or consecration of a church requires that (1) it be withdrawn from the influence of Satan, (2) that it should be elevated to a place of grace and prayer and (3) finally, that it shall be consecrated as the exclusive property of the house of God. This is expressed by the words of the bishop when he invokes God to bless, sanctify and consecrate the church and the altar.

4. The preparation for the consecration is as follows: The consecrating bishop, who should be fasting the day before, sets apart over night, in a

proper place, the relics to be used in the consecration. Light burns before them and Matins and Lauds are said in honor of the saints whose relics have been procured. Twelve crosses are also marked on the walls of the church with candles attached to them.

Next day these candles are lighted, and all things needed are prepared in the church which is left in charge of a deacon duly vested. The bishop goes in procession around the outside of the church three times sprinkling it with Holy Water, knocks three times at the church door with the pastoral staff saying: "Lift up your hands, ye princes and be ye lifted up, ye eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in." Three times the deacon asks: "Who is the King of glory?" Twice the bishop answers: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle," and the third time, "The Lord of armies, He is the King of glory."

The bishop then enters with the clerics and others whose assistance he requires, leaving the rest of the clergy and people outside, and again closes the door. He forms a cross with the letters of the Greek and Latin alphabets, which he inscribes with his staff on ashes previously sprinkled upon the floor of the church—this rite symbolizes the instruction to be given to Catechumens in the elements of the faith.

The cross is made from one corner of the church diagonally to the opposite corner. Upon the Cross

of Christ, the Church continues to flourish from one end of the world to the other.

5. Then the bishop proceeds with the consecration of the altars; he marks five crosses on each with his thumb, which he has dipped in a preparation of water, ashes, salt and wine, specially blessed for this purpose, and sprinkles them seven times with this mixture. He also goes three times around the inside of the church and sprinkles the walls as well as the floor. Later the relics are borne into the church, the bishop, clergy and people taking part in the procession. An address is made to the people on the event of the day, and the outside of the door is anointed with chrism.

6. The sepulchres of the altars, that is, the place where the relics are deposited, are also anointed with chrism, and the relics placed in them. The table of the altar is anointed in the same manner, then incensed and five crosses made on it with the Oil of the Catechumens as well as with the chrism.

Chrism is also used to anoint the twelve crosses which have been marked on the walls. Incense is burned on the five crosses previously made on the altar with the blessed water, oil, and chrism. Finally the bishop makes a cross with chrism on the front and four corners of the altars, then the cloths, vessels, ornaments, etc., are consecrated and the consecration of the church is complete. St. Thomas clearly states the meaning and use of this consecration

(Summa III, XXX) "The rite," says the Saint, "signifies the holiness secured to the Church by Christ's Passion, and which is also required of its members."

CONSECRATION OF A CEMETARY.

1. From the earliest Christian times it has been the custom of the Church to bless the resting places of her dead. What is more appropriate than that the bodies which have been so often sanctified by the body of our Lord, should be gathered in hallowed ground to await the general resurrection.

Next to the Church no place should be more sacred to the congregation than the cemetery, and, if possible, it ought to be consecrated, but as long as this cannot be done the individual graves ought to be blessed.

2. The cemetery, being a holy place, should be kept in good condition and often visited by the living to pray for their friends and relatives. It is an instructive school which vividly places before our eyes our own transitory life, and impresses upon us the fact that in death, we shall all be alike equal, that riches, honor, and worth disappear, and that we are not made for this earth but for eternity.

THE BLESSING AND BAPTISM OF A BELL.

1. In the first centuries church bells were not used. During the Christian persecutions it was the duty of the doorkeeper to inform the faithful of the

time and place of Divine Service. Later wooden instruments were used, our clappers in Holy Week remind us of these. Now and then, trumpets were used for the same purpose. We do not know exactly when bells were introduced; they were used at Nola in Campania and gradually introduced into the churches in the seventh century.

2. On account of their importance in connection with the Divine Service, bells have been solemnly blessed since their first introduction. They are, as it were, messengers from a higher world, calling to the faithful not to forget their heavenly home.

3. The form prescribed in the Pontifical is entitled, "The Blessing of a Bell," though it is popularly called the "Baptism of a Bell," a title by which the Office is mentioned as early as the eleventh century. The bishop or priest delegated by him washes the bell with Blessed Water, anoints it with the Oil of the sick on the outside, at first in silence, then he prays that its tone, like the voice of God, may ward off everything injurious or deadly. He then makes seven crosses with the same oil on the outside, saying each time, "Blessed and sanctified shall this bell be! In the name of the Father," etc. The seven crosses are typical of the sevenfold source of sin and death, against which the bell, sanctified by the sevenfold strength of the Holy Ghost, shall grant assistance to the faithful. He makes four crosses with chrism on the inside—

it shall call the faithful from all parts of the heavens, and inspire them with zeal for God and His Holy Word.

4. Under it he places the thurible with incense and fragrant herbs, to denote the love of God which should inflame Christian hearts in work as well as in prayer; this is denoted furthermore by the Gospel of St. Luke, in which reference is made to the one thing necessary by our Lord when conversing with Martha and Mary. He prays repeatedly that the sound of the bell may avail to summon the faithful and excite their devotion, that it may drive away storms and terrify evil spirits; this power, of course, is due to the blessings and prayers of the Church and not to any efficacy superstitiously attributed to the bell itself.

CORONATION OF A POPE.

1. On the tenth day after the demise of a Pope, the Cardinals assemble in the same place where he died, to the so-called Conclave. After a solemn High Mass, to implore the light of the Holy Ghost, they retire to a part of the palace where they are entirely secluded from the rest of the world. A suite of rooms is given to each cardinal and his attendants. Then all the windows and doors that open outward are walled up, and no Cardinal dare leave his quarters until after the election, except in case of sickness, and even then if he leaves the palace he loses his right of vote. Food is sent in to them

under the greatest supervision, by means of a turn. By this strict seclusion every external influence that might be brought to bear on the papal election is prevented. The Cardinals meet in the chapel every day to vote, this is repeated until some one Cardinal has received at least two-thirds of all the votes. If the election is successful the Cardinal dean asks the one elected if he accepts the office; if he consents, the fisherman's ring is placed on his finger and he must give the name, which he wishes to bear as pope. Then the oldest of the Cardinal deacons opens a window facing the street and announces the result of the election to the crowd of people waiting below in the following words: "Romans, I announce to you good tidings of great joy. We have a Pope, the most eminent and most Rev. Cardinal N. N., who has taken the name N. N."

The fisherman's ring is that small papal seal which represents St. Peter in a boat drawing in his net. With this the Pope seals Decretals of minor importance written in Latin and signed by the cardinal secretary.

The Pope takes a new name, because when Christ made Simon head of the Church He gave him the name Peter. Besides this, the changing of the name indicates that he has been consecrated for the welfare of our Holy Church exclusively, and therefore must sever family ties, or at least not consider them to the detriment of the Church.

2. The newly elected Pope now receives the homage of the Cardinals. They kiss his right foot, that is the cross embroidered on the slipper, as a sign of their allegiance, then they kiss the right hand as a sign of filial veneration. This homage is repeated three times—in the Conclave, in the Sistine chapel, and in St. Peter's church. This may be to denote the threefold power of the Pope. At the last named homage, besides the Cardinals, inferior prelates and persons of rank take part, whereupon the Pope gives the people the Apostolic blessing.

3. Some days later the coronation of the Pope takes place in the following manner:

(1) He is carried into St. Peter's church under a rich canopy as a sign of the respect due to the Head of the Church. In the Chapel of St. Gregory he again receives the homage of the Cardinals and prelates. When leaving the chapel in solemn procession, the master of ceremonies kneels near the door and burns on a plate, castles formed of oakum, saying in a loud voice: "Holy Father, thus the glory of the world passes away." This is repeated three times with a short pause between each. This warning on the vanity of everything earthly is all the more impressive, as in the Chapel of St. Gregory are found the graves of the Popes.

(2) When the Pope reaches the altar of St. Peter, the solemn Mass begins; after the Kyrie has been sung, he sits upon the throne, and the three first

Cardinal bishops, stand before him and implore Almighty God to pour upon him, who has been raised to the highest Apostolic dignity, the fulness of His blessings. Then he receives the Pallium, and thus equipped with the full dignity of the episcopal office ascends for the first time as Pope the altar of St. Peter and continues the Mass. A part of the clergy go now to the tomb of St. Peter to pray for the happy reign of the new Pope, the successor of St. Peter.

(3) At the close of the Mass, the Pope goes to the balcony of St. Peter's church, where the first Cardinal deacon places the triple crown—the tiara—on his head with the words: "Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art Father of Princes and Kings, Ruler of the world; Vicar of our Savior Jesus Christ to whom be glory and honor forever! Amen." In the name of the most Holy Trinity, the new Pope shall rule as teacher, priest and shepherd. After the coronation, the Pope gives the solemn Benediction, with a plenary indulgence.

(4) In grand procession he proceeds to the Lateran church, which is the chief or Cathedral church of Christendom—the mother of all churches—therefore he solemnly takes possession of it; on the way he is handed the keys of the city. He is solemnly received into the Lateran church, where the Prefect of Rome hands him two keys, one of gold, the other of silver, as a sign of his power to bind

and to loose After he has been seated upon the throne, he receives the homage of the Chapter of this church; he is then led into the council hall of the Lateran palace, where he gives to each of the Cardinals and the most distinguished prelates, a gold and a silver memorial coin. From the gallery he bestows his blessing upon the people, and has some small silver coins thrown among them, with the words: "He divided with the poor, his justice shall last forever."

Throughout the entire ceremony of the coronation, the papal dignity is shown to be the highest upon earth, but it must be united with humility and a love of sacrifice.

CONSECRATION IN THE RELIGIOUS STATE.

1. The spirit of Christ is a spirit of sacrifice; this spirit Christ bequeathed to His Church, where it continues to grow in the priesthood, and reaches its highest point in the religious state. This state forms, by the more perfect practice of the virtues and its consequent external activity, a powerful spiritual ally of the Church. Therefore the Church has taken this state particularly under her protection and instituted different consecrations for its various Orders. We find, even in the first Christian centuries, a solemn blessing and consecration of virgins, who dedicated themselves to perpetual chastity and to the service of God. Out of the lives of the hermits and these virgin souls developed the Religious

state. The Church not only regulated this state but blessed and sanctified it; she appointed a time of probation—a novitiate—for those entering the Order, which must last at least one year. During this year the novices must be proved and if they find that they are called to this state of life, they must earnestly prepare for the profession of their vows.

2. Entrance into the novitiate, the so-called Reception, preceded by a longer or shorter period of trial, is made by the solemn reception of the religious habit. The prescribed ceremonies differ according to the object of the different Orders and their respective rules. The essential part is the solemn blessing and investing with the habit.

As levity is generally shown in the dress, so the long, modest dress of Religious should show earnestness, modesty and virtue; therefore the novice is usually reminded at Reception to lay aside worldly sentiments with the worldly garb, and to strive to acquire virtue and modesty. Unless in case of necessity, as long as they remain in the Order, the Religious is never permitted to wear worldly dress again.

3. When the prescribed time of probation has passed, and the novice has reached the required age, then the profession of vows may be made. Until then the novice may leave the novitiate at any time,

and the convent may likewise dismiss him when it is seen that he has no vocation. With the profession, however, he belongs, forever to the Order, as a return to the world is not permitted without a dispensation.

As the ceremonies of Reception vary so do the ceremonies of Profession. What is essential to all, are the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, which are the foundation of the whole Religious State.

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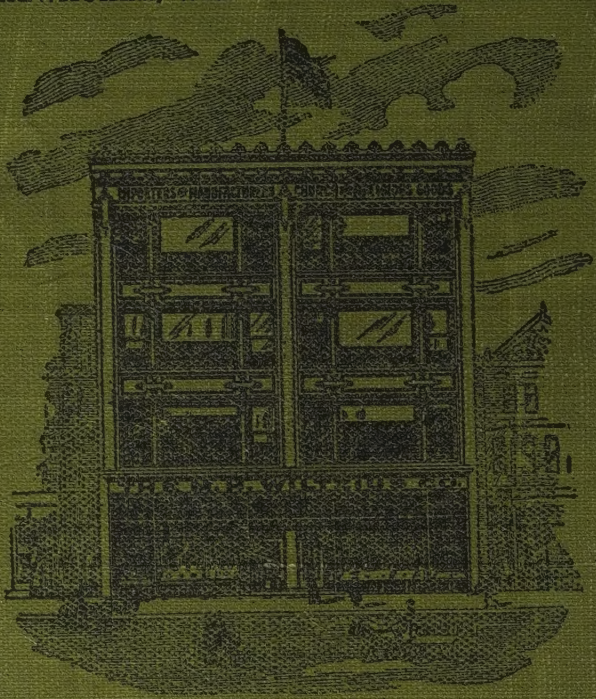

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